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Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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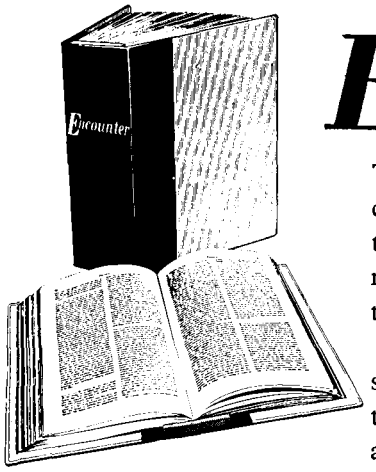

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BERNARD LEVIN writes:

"*Encounter,* which is almost exactly the same age as *The Mousetrap,* never produces an edition without something in it that is well worth reading and not to be found elsewhere; you will be surprised, if you try to think of other magazines which pass both halves of that test every time, at how short the list is. And one of the most agreeable functions of *Encounter* is to act as a forum in which, when a case has been forcefully stated on one side of a question central to our times, other and contrary views are expressed . . . it takes seriously its role as a forum in which the important issues of peace and war, freedom and its opponents, can be discussed calmly, rationally and courteously."

The Times

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Roy Fuller

Happy Valley

WHILE I WAS a solicitor's articled clerk I met the girl who became my wife. It turned out that she lived quite near Mrs Vero's and Miss Barraclough's, overlooking an enclosed area of sunken ground near the sea, which perhaps because of subsidence or bog had never been built on and belonged, eventually at any rate, to the municipality. In later days most of it had been laid out as a putting course but in my childhood it was known as "Happy Valley", its main feature being a wooden stage, deckchairs ranged in front, where a pierrot troupe performed. Even when we were only summer visitors to Blackpool I regularly attended this entertainment. So also had my future wife, of course unknown to me—though one speculates as to whether one had not in fact clapped eyes already captivated on the pretty child whose photographs were later examined with Larkinesque interest and emotion.

Children were allowed—encouraged—to squat in front of the deckchairs, there being in any case no charge except for the hire of the deckchair, the performers rewarded by a collection and the profits on the sale of copies of the music performed. So close to the action, so faithful in support, one saw deep into the appearance and characters of the performers as well as learning by heart dialogue spoken, jokes cracked, songs sung. The make-up on the faces of the actors embrowned the white ruffs they wore, fairly grubby anyway. The soubrette for several seasons was called Lila Dale, a not wholly natural blonde, a little past the first flush of youth, somewhat resembling Alice Faye (to become famous in a few years through the "talkies"). Part of her role in the scheme of things was to get the better of the comedian, whose response to teasing (not utterly unlike Gorill's) was a catchphrase employable in one's own affairs—"Oh you are awful, Lila Dale"—which I still speak with idiosyncratic emphases precisely echoing those used by the oppressed comic concerned. What strange songs became fixed in the mind, sometimes involuntarily returning even sixty years later:

Avalon, Avalon, nightly I pray:
Bring back my loved one some day.

Any Arthurian connotation was not grasped by me: I thought of Avalon as being like Dixie—an American place of nostalgic significance. Perhaps I was right. Other pastoral themes did not always concern places: I bring to mind the Arnoldian apostrophe "Shepherd of the hills, I hear you calling." And did one really regularly utter, with no sense of the grotesqueness of the claim, "I'm the Sheik of Araby"?—the required pronunciation being "Aŕr-ă-bée" (also "sheik" was then not "shake" but "sheek", a less dignified figure being thereby conjured up). Of course, incongruity of song and singer is

ROY FULLER *is a distinguished English poet and literary critic. He was from 1968–73 Oxford Professor of Poetry, and his lectures given during those years have been published under the titles "Owls and Artificers" and "Professors and Gods." His recent volumes of poems include "Tiny Tears" (1973), "From the Joke Shop" (1975). and "Poor Roy" (1977).*

He writes: "What follows is an instalment of some memoirs of childhood and youth, in many ways complete in itself but containing references to previous instalments. The reader is advised not to worry about these, though a few names ought to be explained. Mrs Vero and Miss Barraclough were former landladies of ours. Gorill (pronounced Gŏrill, short for gorilla) was the nickname of a boy bullied at school, Byng his oppressor; Mr Tragenza a master there, a great amateur pianist. Broadbent was my mother's maiden name . . . ."

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inherent in the art form. Byng would sometimes command Gorill to sing for him. Despite the hefty body the voice was thin, uncertain in pitch, strangely high; the song, well-known in a much earlier day, always the same, the tune just discernable:

Sweetheart, I want to tell you,
Tell you how much I love you.
That is the story . . .
That's all I know now.

The last line, though not part of the song, Gorill fitted to the melody with the Calibanesque lyricism previously noted.

I marvel now at the culture with which my mind was stuffed: characters such as Marzipan the Magician from a comic called *The Rainbow*; the vigorous pen and ink illustrations to the serials in *Chums*; silent films with actors now almost forgotten like George K. Arthur and Lya de Putti, the latter, as he confessed, touching even my grandfather's libido; and songs from drawing-rooms as well as Happy Valley, my mother still being asked to use her mezzo-soprano:

Dearest, our day is over,
Ended the dream divine.
You must go back to your life,
I must go back to mine

—a characteristic song of hers, by Tosti, which for my benefit Anthony Powell makes Moreland quote in *A Dance to the Music of Time*. A wonder that a little later on there was any room for the *Fantaisie Impromptu, The Dynasts* and so forth.

I also played in a not large, railed-in, public space over the road from Happy Valley, mostly grass but with a few flower-beds, which my wife told me later was known to her as "Sparrow Park." For a reason now seeming obscure but presumably ornamental, a tall mast had been erected in the middle of it, sustained by steel hawsers up which one often tried to climb, though atrociously rough on the hands. At a certain epoch Sparrow Park was a not negligible feature of my boyhood, its sparse, indeed boring, features being of great physical immediacy—hawsers, rocks in the rockery surrounding the mast with a peculiarly intense whiteness and sharpness, veronicas in beds dwarfed by the sea winds, the terminal semi-circles on the just-climbable iron railings, and a worm from its sandy soil, which some larger boy once tried to make me eat, of predominantly gritty effect. Most of those I played with there, mainly at a time before I went to boarding-school, would need, to be intelligible, explanations too tedious to embark on; the complexity of even simple lives being an inevitable result of the lavish time scale involved. Besides, as noted by Anthony Powell's X. Trapnell, only fiction can be truthful in such matters—memory is too defective and distorting. Who could be interested in the blanks and the guesses and the interconnections associated with those undistinguished figures of so long ago? It is a question that keeps coming up as I write; and if any strokes of art sustain my words (and their readers) that may be in a sense a defeat for "truth."

MR FRASER, as I will call him, the man who had been my father's partner (to use the term loosely, for the organisation in the end was that of a private limited liability company) in the rubber-proofing mill between Manchester and Oldham, lived near Sparrow Park, commuting to the mill by train. His presence in Blackpool could well have been an additional reason for my mother coming to live there. For a few years I was friendly with his five children—until their removal to a grander and more distant house, which more or less coincided with my own removal to boarding-school. I will say nothing of this relationship except to recall, by way of introducing a theme possibly felt to be somewhat muted so far, playing with the four sons, perhaps the daughter, too, a fortune-telling game using playing-cards, the object being to ascertain one's matrimonial destiny. First, the cards enabled in some way the girl concerned to be chosen, though restrictions prevailed and one was excited at managing to get a beauty of the neighbourhood, a fragile blonde called Joan Eastwood being greatly in demand; also Cynthia Hall, and in her case the euphonious name alone may have been for me sufficient attraction, for I do not remember her appearance and may well never have seen her. Such was the domination of what Moreland called the "*princesse lointaine* complex" that it did not seem to matter that the girl was known to the chooser merely by sight or reputation. Needless to say, the cards did not reveal my true fate, doubtless at the time in Sparrow

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Park or Happy Valley, not 500 yards away.

Other indications of the conjugal ceremony and subsequent life were gained by reciting certain lists to the extent demanded by the card turned up, for example "coach, carriage, something or other, dustcart." I remember pointing out with what seemed masterly sophistry, to alleviate the ill-luck of driving from church in the dustcart, that such a vehicle could be cleaned out and tastefully draped. Freud's childhood "latency period" by no means precludes foolish amatory preoccupations, though true anguish in such areas is reserved for adolescence.

A married sister of Mr Fraser also lived close to Sparrow Park and I occasionally played with her sons, too. Mr Fraser's paternal aunt, who had brought up my father and *his* sister as "remittance children" in Caithness, never, so far as I know, came to Blackpool, nor did she marry. She was called Margaret and was known in my family—had probably been thus known to the two siblings in her charge—as "Aunt Maggie." I remember her first at our Waterhead house, to which she paid several visits, presumably from Scotland, my father probably feeling a continuing debt owed to her, for her presence gave him no apparent pleasure, indeed was a source of irritation. She would usually make white puddings during the course of a visit, a delicacy my father was fond of, but their manufacture disordered the house: the operation prolonged, oatmeal and sheep-guts everywhere. There was also a smelly process, perhaps that of boiling the sheep-guts prior to them being used for the pudding skins. I think, too, they presented a problem of procurement, though the oatmeal would come from the sack imported by my father from Scotland and normally used for oatcakes and dipping herrings in before frying or grilling, and his porridge, the last-named eaten with the milk in a separate bowl, a sensible habit adopted by me at that time, later in desuetude.

THAT AUNT MAGGIE doted on my father I expect added to her power of exacerbating him. Even my earliest memories of her involve wildish hair, old-fashioned garb, feyness if not precisely at times being a bit M. She was staying with us when the 1920 Derby was run. The matter was discussed, my father liking a bet as much as speculating in options on the Stock Exchange. Aunt Maggie ignored the favoured horses, pronouncing with visionary power that the winner would be Spion Kop. My father, though scornful of the selection, told her to back it if she was so sure. I do not know whether this was done: unlikely, since she was the last person to be involved in vulgar pleasures or material gain. Spion Kop won at odds of 33–1. In a very short time after my father's death feyness had become paranoia. The last time I saw her was during a stay with my grandparents in Oldham, very likely during the year of my grandfather's mayoralty, 1924–25. One day, after visiting my father's grave in Failsworth Cemetery, we called on Aunt Maggie in her lodgings not very far from the cemetery, nor indeed from the house where I had been born. An allowance was paid to her by her brother and at some date she had come permanently down from Scotland. Her lodgings (in fact, one ground-floor room) were also within easy reach of the rubber-proofing mill and hence of her brother. A brass bedstead dominated the room and Aunt Maggie was in the bed, in a grubby white nightgown. Could she even then have been suffering from her terminal illness? I do not know. She had on occasion to get out of bed, for one thing to serve us, from the bag, with shop cakes of a garish kind, utterly despised in my mother's scheme of things and afterwards adduced by her as evidence of Aunt Maggie's characteristic improvidence. Aunt Maggie must have been warned of our coming, though neither plates nor beverages were supplied. I was struck by her dirty feet; perhaps as much as by her constantly returning to the theme of being watched by detectives through the window which, where not masked by a dressing-table, looked out on the shabby street. She referred openly and often to my father's death, especially distressing to me who even at that early age wanted such things swept under the carpet, dominated as I was by self-consciousness, an inability to comfort even by a formula of words, a general desire for cosy happiness to reign. "Och, the dear", was a Doric phrase of her lament, still vividly remembered, as is her emphasising the loss of his physical beauty and embarrassingly demonstrating her recognition of its inheritance by my brother and me. Not long after this she died of the malady that had killed him. The undoubtedly painful and squalid

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circumstances of her end I tried not to dwell on.

Even in the couple of years or so since we had left Oldham my father's grave had, to my mother's distress, become wildly overgrown, despite her having paid for its upkeep. She had had it marked by a large dark-grey marble gravestone, which referred to its containing also the bodies of my infant siblings George and Eric. That they were already there probably accounted for my father being buried in Failsworth, quite a distance from the house in Waterhead where he died. The legend of these deaths, incised so permanently and publicly, impressed me greatly. I saw the marble only once more though even at a sessile sixty-six I do not entirely rule out the possibility of again seeking it out, despite the growing toughness, even cynicism, in such areas since those days of loss. I think, too, of the miniature and more commonplace tablet marking my mother in the gardens of a Yorkshire crematorium, never revisited.

> "Why does my pen not drop from my hand on approaching the infinite pity and tragedy of all the past? It does, poor helpless pen, with what it meets of the ineffable, what it meets of the cold Medusa-face of life, of all the life *lived*, on every side."

The conclusion of that wonderful cemeterial passage in Henry James's *Notebooks* comes to mind, but I transcribe it only to underline how far short of what I wished in art as well as in feeling I have fallen in life.

I NOW REGRET A LITTLE that I took so much of my memory of my mother's family for my novel *The Perfect Fool*,[1] not a satisfactory work. It might have been more effective as unadorned autobiography but it would not be sensible to filter out all the actuality from its considerable fictionalising. Something may be said, however, about the greater complications of reality in the matter of my grandparents' children, especially since my fiction has avoided difficulty in such matters, often conveniently positing the orphan or the only child.

My mother's eldest brother, Herbert, died as a young man in the influenza epidemic at the end of the First World War. He had a hare-lip, partly hidden by a moustache with waxed ends on the lines of my grandfather's as I knew it in earliest days (the wax and some of the Nietzschean luxuriance subsequently disappeared in my grandfather's case). At his death Uncle Herbert was married, with an infant daughter: his young widow had to go back to mill work. She bore the same Christian name as my mother and like her had a strong, true singing voice. Probably Herbert had met her in the church choir. The contrasting widowhoods of the two Nellies struck me even as a small boy: my mother, not rich but never in peril of having to try to earn a living; Herbert's widow bringing up my cousin in a small terrace house which perhaps was her parents' house to which she had been forced to return. I forget what Herbert's work was: besides singing, his leisure was occupied with painting. A respectable oil of his of tall grey tree-trunks always hung in my grandparents' dining-room, though Herbert's initials were followed by an acknowledgment to some other painter. I was in my grandparents' house when two or three days before his death in 1918 he called on his way home from work saying he wouldn't come in because of a cold.

Two daughters were senior to Herbert: Edith and my mother. Edith, the elder, was known in the family as "Keck", indicating her bossiness as a child. The word is dialect, probably obsolescent even in Edith's youth. Smaller and fairer than my mother, she had inherited more of my grandfather's characteristics. (My grandmother I see now as a saintly person—not at all pious or lacking in the critical faculty, but simply "good." In my mother the critical side was more apparent, especially in later life, but the "goodness" was not lost and I detect it among my own descendants.)

Keck was married to the manager of a gas-works and they had a house or flat on the premises. I remember looking down on a courtyard, its cobbles glistening with the dampness common in Oldham, scene of the rats that infested the gas-works marching in military formation in one of their frequent anabases, as sensationally narrated by Uncle Tom, Keck's husband. A somewhat Victorian death-rate persisted in places like Oldham: Keck, too, became a youngish widow. The means she inherited were between my mother's and the other Nellie's, but in some way she eventually met a musician and married him. I say "in some way" because I think Keck was the only one of my maternal uncles and aunts

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not impressing my youthful mind as musical—though as I write that a memory rises of her "dressing-up" in male attire with my mother, presumably to sing a comic duet. My mother dressed up (the character sometimes favoured being Charlie Chaplin) as late as Seacliffe days: the occasions were rare, the clothes and make-up quite elaborate, the effect successful to others, to me, typically, more or less embarrassing. I suppose my mother's slimness ensured an appeal to the taste prevalent in that ambiguous area, the counterpart of Violet, a character soon to be touched on.

Keck's new husband, youngish, quiet and charming, with the Wodehousian name of Archie Gladman, was really a trombonist but because of a tendency to TB was forced in the end to play his second instrument, the double-bass, for which there was less demand in the theatre and cinema bands he played in. The coming of the talkies also caused difficulties. Around that epoch he died of the disease mentioned and once more Keck and her daughter by Uncle Tom were left in far from easy circumstances.

ONE MUST BE STRUCK, setting down such brief lives, by their suitability for the fiction of, say, Arnold Bennett's best period—their illustration of the petty bourgeoisie's social mobility coupled with its immersion in the more or less sordid details of human existence, yet with a readiness to cope with life's material side and in many ways—some the ways of art—to rise above it. John, the sibling immediately following my mother, spent most of his Army service in the First World War in a concert party. He was then extremely young, blond, blue-eyed, slender, and, among other roles, was a "female impersonator", apparently celebrated, for I have a printed postcard of him in drag, signed by him with his sobriquet "Violet." He brought back from the Near East an inscribed cigarette-case presented to him by some local potentate appreciative of his performance. Nothing untoward need be read into this: soon after the War Uncle John married a girl called Edith—I think in fact a sweetheart before he went off to play Violet for the soldiers and the "sheeks" and lived happily ever after. Never rounded, Edith after bearing her first child lost a fair amount of weight and so was known ever after as "Bone", a nickname deriving from the communist medico Dr Edith Bone, at that time, as she was much later, prominent in the news. This also helped to distinguish her, in conversational reference, from "Keck."

Uncle John worked on the administrative side of the cotton trade but as the years went by he did more and more acting for the BBC, appearing, for instance, in a long-running radio series with Wilfred Pickles, and in more serious productions by Norman Swallow and D. G. Bridson. When I was a boy I had seen and admired him in amateur dramatics. In private life he had a professional's power of mimicry and assuming accents; also he could make one laugh. He was close to my grandmother and, like her, "good." He retained remarkably the appearance that had made his personation as Violet so effective. I say this though I did not see him during the last twenty years of his life. In his latter days, after Bone had died and he was permanently in a guest-house aptly, one hopes, called "The Anchorage", on the Fylde coast only a few miles from my school of former times, we corresponded, perhaps his first letter prompted by my election as Oxford's Professor of Poetry. He had told me that one of his fellow "guests" at The Anchorage was a Miss Kenworthy, aged eighty-five, who as a young woman had lived in my birthplace, Failsworth, and knew my father before he was married.

MISS KENWORTHY apparently knew my work as a writer before Uncle John tied up at The Anchorage and so was somewhat staggered by the perspectives opened up by his relating his history. He asked me to write to her as an action that would give her pleasure, and a letter came in reply which I will reproduce with certain omissions and explanations—not, however, distorting the facts. I should emphasise that the mystery of my father's origins was pervasive, the veil lifted only in a few accidental ways. For instance, after he had left school my brother went to teach in a prep school while brooding over possible careers and found that the matron had come from Lybster, where Aunt Maggie had reared my father and his sister, and was able to shed some light, also cast a few more shadows. The enigma was deepened by my father's looks and ability. Miss

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Kenworthy told Uncle John that when he arrived in Failsworth they thought him the scion of Spanish nobility, though it must be said that rickets and poverty made it easy to stand out physically in those days, and later, among the indigenous population of the Manchester conurbation. However, Uncle John confirmed that he looked the hidalgo part, was one of the handsomest men he had known.

> "Your letter [wrote Miss Kenworthy on 28 January 1970] revived a lot of old memories. Days spent in my youth in Hollinwood [where the rubber-proofing mill was situated] and Failsworth. I remember Mr Fraser bringing your father and his sister Minnie, who became a nurse, from Scotland to stay with him in Failsworth. Your father entered the business during the [First] War and evidently made good. I was sorry to hear of his death, also your mother's. I have lost touch with the Frasers, except Mr Fraser's sister, who is living near Windsor where her younger son lives. She was engaged to my cousin, Dr Lomas, when they were young but he died at twenty-six. Afterwards she married Dr Buckley [I have changed the name], but it ended in divorce. They had two sons, the elder killed in the [Second, of course] War. It is a small world. I never thought I should know your uncle. I believe Mr Fraser's father was gamekeeper on some estate in Scotland. Mr Fraser used to talk about the boy and girl with whom he and his sister played when young. Well it certainly has revived old memories. I am not much good at writing. I am past it. Wishing you every success."

There was already something amiss with Mrs Buckley's marriage in the days when I played in Sparrow Park with her elder little boy (so unlucky in the War in which I myself had a comparative joy-ride). And was death rather than desertion put about as the reason for Dr Buckley's absence? Perhaps that is exaggerating the horror of scandal still prevalent in that society at that time: more likely that, as ever, my own understanding and memory are deficient.

I HAVE LEFT in simplified form the mechanics of my father's business association with Mr Fraser and indeed many details necessarily remain obscure. I will not say more except that the firm name originally included that of an elderly Jew who I think had died or retired by the time my father had achieved partnership (more properly, directorial) status. I mention this for several reasons. My father was sometimes thought to look not Spanish but Jewish, an expected presence in a trade in which in Manchester Jews played a great part. This may well have been the cause of my grandfather's initial prejudice against him as a suitor for his younger daughter, especially having regard to my grandfather's familiarity with *The Merchant of Venice*. Some of my father's and mother's friends were comfortably-off Jews and I dare say that bore upon the increasing luxury and sophistication of my parents' houses and possessions. The truly intellectual side of Jewish life I suspect did not exist among the Weinbergs and the Gotliffs, friends whose names seem utterly familiar sixty years on, and so was not communicated, but whisky and good cigars, solid furniture, a love of the theatre and of motor cars, an excellent tailor in Manchester memorably called Macbeth, serious bridge—many such things were probably rooted in my father through his Jewish contacts, though the native ground was obviously fertile. I should add also, for there is some evidence for it, that my father's mysterious father may in truth have been Jewish.

My mother, whose cultural background was small town Tory politics, low Church of England, church choir, parlour music and a general life style of necessary modesty, had some adjustments to make. She once told me of her astonishment, threat of uncontrollable giggles, when first dining with the Weinbergs (or the Gotliffs) and a preliminary prayer was said, at my father, not having a skull-cap or whatever the object is called, putting his folded napkin on his head. After his death she more or less slowly and completely regressed to the styles and prejudices of her upbringing, though she was always lavish about her clothes and saw that my first suit with long trousers was made to measure, also finding a decent tailor in Blackpool called Southworths, who made my suits and overcoats until I left the town when I was twenty-three or twenty-four.

I called Mr Fraser "Uncle Alf", in the manner of the north. His mode of life may too have caught something from Jewish business

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associates. After he had moved from the Happy Valley area we were only very occasional visitors. In the drawing-room of the new house was a grand piano, a pianola of such sophistication that as indications came round on the roll—"*p*", say, or "*rall*"—a row of levers in front of the keyboard enabled one to add the required expressiveness. The piano rolls available included classical pieces so one temporarily became a Tragenza of the instrument. Typical of my lack of enterprise that I never even attempted to learn the piano. I decided at an early age that it was something I could not do, just as having established myself as open sprint champion as early as my penultimate year at school I never tried to win the half-mile or mile.

On one visit to the Frasers' I accidentally came across Uncle Alf in a room lit only by a lamp that threw illumination on his open book, a drink at his side. The comfort and purpose of the scene caught my admiration. Perhaps he was turning a page with the hand on which, from a cause never revealed, one finger lacked its top joint. The minaciousness of this feature was recalled later by the sudden staggering close-up of the hand of the Godfrey Tearle character in Hitchcock's *The Thirty-nine Steps*. The rubber-proofing mill had obviously continued to prosper. It was sometimes said in my family that my mother's shares had been acquired by Uncle Alf too cheaply. Was it a trace of guilt or mere respect for culture that prompted him at the end of my schooldays to enquire about my taste in gramophone records apropos a birthday present? More probably my fascination with the pianola had tickled him, glad to have an enthusiast for his extravagance—though I expect I was too green ever to have discussed music with him. A list was sent and to my amazement he bought everything on it. Included were Bax's *Tintagel* and some Bach violin sonatas played by Isolde Menges and Harold Samuel, somewhat odd indication of breadth of taste, still persisting. Jewish generosity and ostentation unfortunately played little part in my own life, the petty-bourgeois anal-erotic character pretty well taking over.

A GENTILE FRIENDSHIP, however, best survived the crisis of my father's death; a couple addressed by my brother and me as Uncle Fred and Auntie Vi, the titles again honorific. Uncle Fred had been a business associate, a drysalter; and he also took his family for holidays on the Fylde coast, eventually retiring there. I remember him from my father's lifetime: he owned an unusual car—a Ford with an English body, however that had come about. I was in it once when he drove in the tram track leading from Blackpool to St Annes (where The Anchorage was situated in later times) and took the speedometer up to what seemed then the dashing speed of 30 mph. He called to my father, also driving an open car nearby (could it have been his first car, the Yankee Overland?): "I'm a tram." It comes to me that Uncle Fred, small, sandy, humorous, was no stranger to the bottle, certainly in retirement, though that epoch was sadly truncated for I judge him to have been no more than fiftyish when he died—leaving £30,000, a tidy sum for the '20s.

His ménage in the house on the front at Lytham where he ended his days had a good few features regarded by my brother and me as bizarre. It included at one time both Vi's parents, the father already decrepit. I once came into a room where he was sitting with eyes closed, head forward, a thread of saliva hanging from his open mouth, and with a lurch of the stomach thought he was dead. On that occasion he had merely fallen asleep. Vi's mother survived him but most of the time I knew her was suffering from the effects of a stroke, though capable of being inserted into the large, chauffeured limousine Uncle Fred possessed at that period, for a "drive." She was troubled by one of her toes, which gradually stuck up to such an extent as to stop her getting a shoe on. The solution adopted, striking as it seemed to me, was to have the toe amputated. I would guess this proposed and arranged by Auntie Vi, always sweepingly direct and practical. My mother told me of being with her when buying gramophone records. "Yes, I'll have that", she would repeatedly say after a few revolutions of the disc played by the shop assistant, carrying into everyday occasions Uncle Alf's birthday lavishness.

This was the heyday of the coloured duettists, Layton and Johnstone (the former only recently dead, well into his eighties), a liking for whose records Vi passed on to my mother. From these, as from Lila Dale and her

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confrères, I got to know many songs including one I sang then as incongruously as *The Sheik of Araby* but which today becomes more and more apt:

There's nothing left for me,
Of days that used to be,
They're just a memory among my souvenirs.

From my mother, herself an excellent if limited cook, I inherited a notebook of recipes, unfortunately sparse and unsystematic. However, it includes some of Auntie Vi's recipes which in their generous proportions of rich to plain ingredients reflect her nature, and fondness for what she conceived to be the good things of life, e.g.:

PLUM CAKE (VI)

6 oz. butter, 2 oz. syrup, 6 oz. caster sugar. Beat these to a cream, add 3 eggs and ¼ pt. warm milk, and beat again.
Add ½ lb. [plain?] flour, ½ teasp. baking powder, 1 lb. currants, ¼ lb. candied peel, 3 oz. ground almonds.
[No oven temperature or baking time given, but presumably lowish and prolonged respectively.]

DISCUSSION AMONG Fred and Vi's friends was caused by the rise in the household of a Rasputin figure—the comparison is purely metaphorical—called Mr Marple who I believe began as the person in charge of Uncle Fred's motor yacht. When I was aboard, this commodious vessel merely chugged about the Ribble estuary—to my relief, for I feared the open sea, with its twin threat of sickness and death by drowning. But longer voyages were undertaken, though these did not satisfy Mr Marple's capabilities, and gradually he came to participate in most family affairs, even appearing in the drawing-room at teatime, and probably giving advice over such problems as the vertical toe. He was certainly useful in getting the great bulk of Vi's mother into the back of the limousine, but the attractions of his physique and conversations seemed minimal, complacency and dogma ruling in the latter area.

Who can tell from the outside what forces operate within a family, particularly where cash or infatuation plays a covert part? When Uncle Fred died some thought that Mr Marple would succeed in marrying Auntie Vi, but both the yacht and its Palinurus were got rid of (with what complexities I do not know) and she settled down to widowhood. She would have been an attractive catch and not only for her money: pretty, blonde, plumpish, with fine pale skin, she was always enclosed in a cloud of Caron's *Sweet Pea*, and she managed her household with controlled lavishness. Perhaps she had gone along too easily with Fred's whims and eccentricities: once on a country drive their little daughter, an only child, had coveted a lamb seen on a farm. This was bought for her more or less on the spot and actually kept in the house until its droppings became too copious to tolerate. But to have stood out against Fred in such matters would have implied an element of feminine nagging quite alien to her nature. Indeed, who knows but what she was the prime mover in the lamb affair?

ALL THESE OLDER PEOPLE mentioned are dead to my knowledge or must surely be dead, but as I write this in the Spring of 1978 my grandparents' youngest child, called Fred after his father, lives still. We exchange an occasional letter but I have not seen him for donkey's years. He is not a great many years older than me: when I was born he went off to school gleefully repeating "I'm an uncle."

He was still living with my grandparents well on into my boyhood, the source of a few miscellaneous precepts in the conduct of life I would never have thought to challenge though incapable of following them myself; for example, that in handwriting the movement of the pen must be guided by the whole hand not just the fingers. Though at the time of this pronouncement he was studying for some technical qualification in the grocery trade, in the end he succeeded my grandfather as Superintendent Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths where penmanship was more to the point—at any rate in the time of my grandfather who I remember making the register entries and writing the certificates in his copperplate hand (two fingers extended on top of the pen, the other two, victims of the contracture previously mentioned, tucked neatly away). The boxes of fine pen-nibs, capable of meticulous thickening of the downstrokes none the less; the miniature pair of clogs; the wooden bas-relief by some primitive

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artist of a Milletesque man with a wheelbarrow—such memorabilia of visits to my grandfather's office must have descended to Uncle Freddy with the job. The office was near Tommyfield, Oldham's ancient open market place where once were to be found such figures in my grandfather's lore as the man standing there (as he would say on 31 December) with as many noses as there are days in the year, and the vendor of ice-cream who called: "It's made from milk, sugar and eggs; highly flavoured with the juice of the pine; frozen into consistency by the power of ice, assisted by muriated soda. Only one half-penny a glass." Those, of course, were the days when the results of even Auntie Vi's kind of recipes might be found in the market.

Perhaps from Uncle Freddy came my admiration for pier-end music, to be undermined at school though perhaps never entirely deleted—composers such as Luigini and Eric Coates played by him on my grandparents' gramophone, exotically single-horned like a fabulous beast. I must add, however, that all his life he has sung more serious music with choral societies, including that of the BBC. Alas, the Broadbentian vocal powers were not part of my inheritance: *Avalon* and *Shepherd of the Hills* and *Parted* have down the years been warbled by me more in Gorill's style.

Quartet

(for P.)

1. Overture

The parlour scented
with spent caps from the gun
the visitor brought him.

They laughed when he shot
at the Black and Tans
from behind the tree.

2. Wensleydale

Stone-walled fields flash past
the window. You talk about
closing-time.
The man handed
a loaded gun, and directed
to a derelict house;

emptying it
into the sentry-post,
his exact position established.

He appeared when you fired,
like a moth wheeling drunk
in a pool of light. Blasted

against the bedroom wall,
riddled, he split his sides
like a doll, ripping,
bursting open like a ripe fruit;
covered in the sickly juice.
His shots as lethal as any, soldiers
cheer, remembering friends.

3. Newcastle

Sprawled across the pavement, the cat
squanders the summer, basking. A hollow rattle
sounds (a spring released)

as something ruffles my hair:
two boys, lying on a garage roof,
firing dried peas rifled

from the larder (a report
on the News suggested,
rippling this quiet backwater).
A pea clowns in the gutter.

4. Home

Intent on its task, the drill
eases in its head,
of scorched wood and hot metal

Its innocence cries
to neighbours. Indignant,
they turn up their sets.

Neil Astley

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Michael Thompson

Rubbish Theory

The Creation & Destruction of Value

"CONFRONT THE OBJECT", said Capability Brown, "and drawn nigh obliquely. . . ." Just as, to understand poverty, we must study the very rich: so, to understand value, we must study rubbish. The one is the dark side of the other. But the social sciences, paying little heed to the tenets of landscape gardening, have tended to adopt a brutish head-on approach. Anthropologists interest themselves in what is noticed, treasured, and admired in an exotic society rather than with what is disregarded, discarded, and despised. The sociology of knowledge is well-established, yet the sociology of ignorance scarcely exists. Economics is concerned with scarcity; if something becomes dirt-cheap it disappears from view.

There is more than just aesthetic satisfaction to be gained from this devious approach. The fact is that the dark side and the light side feed one on the other—that which was worthless becomes valuable: what was once admired is now despised. As we draw nigh obliquely this continual flux is revealed to us; from the front it must always remain hidden. So the study of rubbish holds out the possibility, not just of understanding value, but of understanding the process whereby value is continually being created and destroyed.

We are all familiar with the way despised Victorian objects have become sought-after antiques—with bakelite Art-deco ashtrays that have become collectors' items, with old bangers transformed into vintage motor cars. Yet, without a theory of rubbish, we can have no real understanding of how and why these transformations occur.

The basic idea in Rubbish Theory is that, when we take stock of our world, we are very selective; we only include those items that are of value—anything that has no value is excluded. If we did not do this we could never complete our stock-taking. Those objects that we include fall into two categories: those that increase in value over time (the *durable*) and those that decrease in value over time (the *transient*). For some objects, such as Queen Anne walnut tallboys and second-hand Ford Cortinas, membership is self-evident—they lie within a region of fixed assumptions. Other objects may not be so unequivocal and, by making a personal aesthetic commitment, we may be able to tip them one way or the other. Such flexibility is made possible by the existence of a third, unnoticed, category—*rubbish*. A transient object, declining in value, can sink into rubbish and then at some later date be discovered by some creative individual and transferred to durability. Just why some objects get transferred and others do not—and just why some people are able to do this and others are not—are the intriguing questions that Rubbish Theory raises and tries to answer.

Rubbish Theory, with its bizarre subject matter and engaging paradoxes, is often smiled upon by economists, sociologists and physical scientists as if it were some Wodehousean corner of Academia: an amusing backwater, like the Drones Club or Lord Emsworth's estate, far removed from the mainstream of social life. There is the assumption that, though it may hold for Victoriana and bakelite ashtrays, it does not, of course, hold for major components of the economy such as housing. There is the assumption that, though the qualities of durability, transience, and rubbishness may be subject to a certain social malleability, this variation takes place within severe natural limits. Both these assumptions are mistaken.

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BETWEEN 1966 and 1971 I was living in North London and working as a carpenter for a small (and now bankrupt) building firm. Like all my colleagues, I also "did foreigners" (moonlighting—

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taking on other jobs, theoretically in one's spare time), installing a cast-iron grate and marble surround here, building a Georgian pipe-box to conceal the gas-fired central heating there. Essentially our work consisted of transforming dilapidated early-Victorian artisans' cottages into trendy residences for *Observer* journalists, and we were all piratically engaged in the early stages of a process that has since been christened "gentrification."

"Carpenter" is perhaps too grand a title for my activities as a wood-butcher which, appropriately, were very crudely dovetailed with the desultory pursuit of my Ph.D. at London University. And it was this Swiftian régime of wallowing in the ordure of the blocked drains in the basements of Ripplevale Grove in the morning and contributing to seminars on cognitive economics at University College in the afternoon that led me to the realisation that even so major a component of the economy as housing is subject to exactly the same social dynamics as are bakelite ashtrays.

The kinds of societies traditionally studied by anthropologists have little or no recorded history and this means that when, more recently, they have started to look at Western society, anthropologists have found it difficult to take account of the historical record: not surprisingly, since they operate within a set of techniques that has been evolved specially to cope with situations where such an historical record does not exist. This is something of a sore point with the historian whose traditional territory the anthropologist muscles in on in this way. Let me try to make amends (and bolster my argument) by at least starting off with an historical example: the Packington Street Affair.

THE PACKINGTON ESTATE in Islington in North London consisted of one long street of early Victorian terraced houses called Packington Street and a number of smaller streets of similar houses which included one side of a large garden square—Union Square. The local council decided that this estate should be compulsorily purchased, demolished, and replaced by a complex of modern council flats. As usual, the interval between decision and implementation was lengthy and the houses suffered deterioration through "planners' blight." Even so, their condition was sufficiently good for a (largely middle-class) pressure group to oppose the demolition. They claimed that the houses were structurally sound, needing only modernisation, bathrooms in the rear extensions, and so on, and that they were architecturally and environmentally valuable.

The controversy raged and eventually reached the Housing Minister, who at that time was Mr Richard Crossman. He decided in favour of demolition. In his speech announcing this decision he said:

> "These rat-infested slums must be demolished. Old terraced houses may have a certain snob-appeal to members of the middle-class but they are not suitable accommodation for working-class tenants."

From this amazing statement (he was a Cabinet Minister in a Labour Government) we can extract the Crossman definition of a slum, which runs something like this: "An old building which, occupied by members of the middle-class, forms part of our glorious heritage, is, if occupied by members of the working-class, a rat-infested slum." So Mr Crossman would have agreed with my thesis that slums are socially determined and that such physical, physiological, and economic considerations as poor living standards, lack of services and amenities, poor health, dampness, inadequate light, inadequate cooking facilities, overcrowding, high fire risk, while real enough are essentially the by-products of a concealed social process. They are the effects, not the cause.

A commonsense view of the nature of housing would be that, when new, a house had a certain expected life-span and a certain, quite high, value. As time went by the expected life-span would decrease and so would its economic value. When it reached its allotted span its value would be virtually zero, it would be demolished, replaced by a new house, and the process would start again.

A CONCEALED SOCIAL PROCESS operates behind this commonsensical façade. If we say that those houses with a finite expected life-span and decreasing economic value are in the *transient* category and those with zero expected life-span and zero value (excluding site and scrap value) are in the *rubbish* category, then we can see that there is a third category, the *durable* category, the members of which, flying in the face of common sense, have an ideally infinite expected life-span and increase in value over time: what the estate-agent terms "period houses", the buildings that constitute "our glorious heritage." The euphemistic terminology of the estate agent confirms the cultural nature of these categories. The transient houses are described as "new" or "contemporary" or "post-War" and, if they happen to be terraced, they will be described as "Town Houses" to avoid any polluting confu-

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sion with the rubbish houses which are optimistically described as "older-type terraced houses."

Economists, alas, are also a party to the commonsensical view of housing:

> "Houses are one of the most durable forms of capital. . . . As far as mere physical life is concerned, houses may last for generations, given reasonable maintenance. Admittedly they fall in public esteem, i.e. become obsolescent, sooner than this but even obsolescence takes place quite slowly."[1]

The economist's assumption here is that the long expected life-span of a house derives from its intrinsic physical properties: the lastingness of bricks and mortar, tiles and plaster, timber and glass; and that its career (its gradual physical and social decline) is the natural outcome of fair wear and tear, of continual use and the ravages of the weather. This "natural" gradual decline, so the argument runs, is accompanied by, and may be slightly modified by, a parallel fall in public esteem, deriving from the effects of obsolescence and the vagaries of fashion.

THE WHOLE PROCESS and its interpretation appear so obvious, so self-evident, that it may seem rather pedantic to go to such lengths to set it out here. But the whole of this commonsense account is based on the physical properties of houses and these, I wish to argue, are the by-products, not the determinants, of the process. Consequently the explanation must be stood on its head. It is not that the intrinsic properties of consumer durables naturally give rise to this familiar pattern of decline, but that those commodities which display this pattern of decline we (or rather, the economists among us) assign to the category "consumer durable." Further, this lastingness is imposed not by intrinsic physical properties but by the social system. An adequate theory of the economics of housing must be able to account for this social process of imposition; both the mechanisms that make it possible and the dynamic forces that cause it to change. I do not mean to imply that the natural properties of objects have *nothing* to do with this social process. Obviously, it is much easier to impose durability on a solid granite-faced Edwardian bank than on a thatched wattle-and-daub cottage, yet we frequently choose the more difficult alternative. Equally obvious is the corollary that any natural explanation for such a manifestly unnatural choice is bound to be inadequate.

First, the natural process of decline becomes a little less natural when we realise that the fact that buildings last for generations is dependent upon their receiving "reasonable maintenance." The amount of maintenance that is deemed reasonable is not a quantity deriving naturally from the intrinsic physical properties of the house and its environment. The level of maintenance that is deemed reasonable for a building is a function of its expected life-span and its expected life-span is a function of the cultural category to which that building at any moment is assigned; if its category membership changes, so will its expected life-span and its reasonable level of maintenance.

For example, it is obvious, in view of the recent Appeal for money and the vigorous public response to it, that most of us believe that £2,000,000 is a reasonable sum to expend on the maintenance of St Paul's Cathedral, this being the amount required to prevent it from collapsing under its own weight. On the other hand, to expend an equivalent sum on a badly-bulged block of Victorian working-class dwellings in Limehouse would plainly be considered unreasonable. This is because the expected, or ideal, or hoped-for, life-span of St Paul's is immense (at least a further 500 years) and perhaps infinite, while that of the slum tenement is a few years at the most. We might say that the "natural" life-span of St Paul's is being artificially prolonged; that of the slum tenement artificially curtailed. Both in the first instance were built to last. St Paul's Cathedral and the East End Industrial Dwellings are evidently in very different cultural categories, and their expected life-spans and reasonable levels of maintenance vary accordingly. So the economist's argument remains reasonable as long as the expected life-spans of buildings change only in response to the march of time. If we find that their expected life-spans change in response to other factors, such as the socially induced transfers

[1] R. C. O. Matthews, *The Trade Cycle* (1959). There is, unfortunately, some confusion of terminology here, for which I must carry the blame. In describing housing as "one of the most durable forms of capital" the enonomist does not mean that houses are in the *durable* category as I have defined it. He means that the value of houses decreases more slowly than that of most other things: that their expected life-spans are longer. But the economist puts all houses into my *transient* category and in so doing accepts the commonsense view in which there are only two categories, *transient* and *rubbish*. As a house transfers from the *transient* to the *rubbish* category so it passes out of the economist's field of vision, becoming valueless and so no longer possessing any sense of scarcity.

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between cultural categories, then the economist's argument becomes fundamentally unreasonable.

Second, the decline in public esteem which normally is seen as a peripheral social accompaniment to the "natural" process of decline of the house is, in fact, a complex and partially independent process. And it looks as though the process of physical decline is not really a "natural" process anyway, but is closely tied up with cultural categories and in particular with the expected lifespan that we attribute to a building. In other words, the initial separation of natural and social factors is not valid. This decline in public esteem—that is, obsolescence—is commonly held to precede the natural physical decline of houses, but nevertheless is considered to proceed quite slowly. But is the rate of obsolescence a constant for any particular building or is it an independent or partially independent variable?

To answer this we must enquire into just what obsolescence is. Obsolescence derives from the interrelation of the form of the building, which is largely fixed at the time of construction, and two influences which do change through time. One of these is Technology and the other Fashion.

For example, in the mid-18th-century, the owner of a new house in the City of London would find that his property gradually became obsolete in two ways. On the one hand his plumbing system discharging into a cesspit in his rear basement room, while perfectly adequate when the house was new, would gradually appear less and less attractive after the invention in 1779 of Alexander Cumming's patent water closet and in 1778 of Joseph Bramah's water valve-closet. And the longer it remained there the less attractive it would become. No matter how long he held on to his property he would never find it becoming more attractive, because it possessed such crude sanitation rather than a low-level bathroom suite with his-and-her bidets. That is, the march of technological evolution is irreversible and linear. By contrast he would find, to begin with, that the style of newer houses was in some ways rather different from that of his house and slowly these differences would become greater and greater. He would find public opinion swinging away from his style of house and rating the newer houses as altogether more fashionable. But, provided he and his heirs held on to their house (and assuming they staved off all attempts at compulsory purchase), they would eventually find that, rather than becoming less and less desirable, it was becoming more and more desirable—the style of his house had become fashionable once more. Thus the progress of fashion, while irreversible, is clearly not linear but cyclical.

The relative contributions to obsolescence of technological evolution and fashion may vary considerably; sometimes one is dominant, sometimes the other. But this balance is not reflected in the weight given to the two influences in scholarly commentary. The role of technological innovation features in every textbook on economics, but what of fashion? Well, that is best left to women's magazines. Fashion, being seen as frivolous, ephemeral, transient, and irrational, is not a fit subject for scholarly attention where what is prized is the serious, the persistent, the durable, and the rational.[2]

SERIOUS THOUGHT has long been biased towards the utilitarian (for instance, the satisfaction of physiological and social needs in response to such universals as inclement weather and the threat of attack) and away from the question of fashion (for instance, the seemingly whim-like particularistic oscillations that elevate first one need then another, as shortlived as they are unpredictable, but essentially trivial in that they are seen as contained within the universal and eternal frame).

Economics is no exception to this general rule; indeed it has produced one of the most explicit and persuasive formulations of it. What an awesome pit opens up in the hitherto firm terrain of understanding if we admit that perhaps all these years we have had things the wrong way round and that really, instead of examining the eternal and unchanging, we should have been studying the erratic flutterings of the butterfly of taste!

With this possibility in mind, let us take a garden square in an inner suburb of North London. The square is real enough but, to protect my sources, must remain unnamed. The date is 1965 and the square, though it still exists, is not now as it was then. All things are in flux, and when describing specifics one must always attach a time and place label. The generalities of the process, though, have a timeless and universal quality: there are other Innominate Squares in cities all the world over. When the houses in this square were new, they stood on the outskirts of the City, there were green fields visible from the rear windows and the majestic plane trees, for whose protection residents' associations are now organised, were tiny saplings. The square was part of a late Georgian and early

[2] Such a largely unquestioned assumption underlies the refusal, in the 1960s, to grant the course in fashion at the Royal College of Art the degree status which was extended to all other courses.

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Victorian suburb built by speculators in modest imitation of the earlier grand estates in central London such as Bedford Square and Belgravia. Sir John Summerson notes a certain decline in taste and competence about this period and that it was most marked in the "remoter regions of Paddington, Chelsea, and Islington where a less prosperous class of tenant was anticipated."[3] So these houses when new were moderately desirable, moderately expensive, designed for and occupied by moderately prosperous middle-class families: those in modest middle-management in the City or comfortable bureaucracy in Westminster, or perhaps fairly successful men of commerce, merchants, and large shopkeepers.

OVER THE NEXT HUNDRED OR SO YEARS the houses in this square followed a career so familiar, not only in housing but throughout the entire range of what economists call consumer durables, that we accept it as part of the natural order of things. The houses declined, both in physical terms and with reference to the social standing of their inhabitants, to whom, over the years, ownership had passed.

Consequently, it is rather difficult to imagine what a house in this square must have been like, both in physical and social terms, in 1840 when it was brand new and on the market for the first time. Obviously the structure, the paintwork, and so on would have been in excellent order, as would the communal garden in the centre of the square. In social terms the house would probably have been seen then in much the same way as we now see a new four- or five-bedroomed Wates-built town house in a tasteful little development in Barnet, Chislehurst, or Carshalton Beeches.

Over the next 60 years or so the house declined surprisingly rapidly. This was the heyday of the Industrial Revolution and the rate of technological change was extremely high. Yet it could well be argued that fashion played a more important role than technological change in bringing about this rapid decline. Islington had barely established itself as a desirable bourgeois suburb when the railways, main-line and suburban, totally invalidated the logic underlying its development. Admittedly, Barnsbury, Highbury, and Canonbury were served by the North London Line from Richmond to Broad Street, but the massive radiating network of lines that developed between 1838, when Euston was opened, and 1877, when the Holborn Viaduct was completed, meant that for the first time the moderately prosperous could work in London and live in the country (not that it remained country for long!). A spectacular change in fashion gave impetus to this migration: the rapid collapse of the classical tradition and its replacement by the various brands of Gothic, Elizabethan, and Venetian that characterised the Victorian era.

ALMOST OVERNIGHT the Georgian house in Islington became unfashionable. The inhabitants fled, not so much because technological change had rendered inadequate the amenities of their houses, but in order to join their equals or betters in the optimistic new Victorian suburbs. Into the vacuum moved those on the next rung down the economic ladder. In these early years of decline Islington, along with Chelsea and St John's Wood, exhibited a tarnished gentility and provided a favourite place for prosperous Victorian gentlemen to install their mistresses in pretty, but small and modestly priced, houses. But by the end of the 1890s the area had descended past the naughty to the straightforward seedy and, eventually, the downright sordid.

AND SO THE DECLINE continued. In the period between the Wars our Georgian house in a garden square, along with most houses in Islington, had become a multi-occupation tenement, each floor let as a single unit and, with luck, a cold tap and small lead-lined corner sink on each half-landing, and a single W.C. in the rear extension on the ground floor. Rents seldom exceeded five shillings per week per floor and the legislation provided by the various Rent Acts merely exacerbated the existing situation and trend. Landlords either could not afford, or saw no point in, maintaining their properties and this attitude was reflected and justified by the market value of the houses, which was extraordinarily low.

One of the most spectacular examples concerns a four-storey house occupied by a winkle-stall-holder and her husband. Just after the Second World War they were offered their house, free, by the landlord. They refused to accept it. The house still stands and has changed hands several times since (but not for nothing). Evidently the life-span expected of the houses both by landlords and tenants was very short. Many of these houses did indeed attain their allotted span and were

[3] John Summerson, *Georgian London* (1945; n.e. 1962).

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demolished and replaced by remarkably well-built blocks of workers' flats in a monolithic Queen Anne style, but the turn of events—the War and its subsequent years of austerity—imposed a long-protracted senility on the remainder, with the result that many, including the houses in our square, are still there today.

Externally they show most of the signs of long-term neglect: bulged brickwork due to failure to repoint, peeling or non-existent paintwork, decayed stucco, which in some cases has been removed (and not replaced) in response to a Dangerous Structures Order, cracked front steps, window sashes propped with short lengths of timber after the sash-cords have broken, slates cracked and missing, and, frequently, roofs waterproofed with hessian and bitumen—a cheap alternative to re-slating.

The railings around the basement area are rusty, often the elegant cast-iron pineapples surmounting the corner posts have disappeared, the top-rail has rusted away from the post and is only held in place by a few turns of wire or insulating tape, and some of the uprights, having worked loose, have been appropriated as spears for long-forgotten gang-fights and replaced by odd lengths of redundant gas pipe.

The front doors are often unpainted with a clear long triangular gap at the head—the result of distortion of the opening during settlement. But sometimes the tenant has modernised his front door by flushing it with hardboard, in which case it displays a rusty chromium-plated letter-box-cum-knocker made of pressed steel, and a collection of assorted plastic bell pushes. The front area is usually decorated with a large number of dustbins (one for each occupation unit), and scooters and mopeds under waterproof covers. The door number is often simply crudely painted on in large figures, and an end-of-terrace house will usually have its return elevation decorated with graffiti.

BUT, WHAT IS THIS! Here in the middle of all these uniformly dilapidated houses is one, immaculately painted Thames Green, with orange front door complete with six fielded panels, brass dolphin knocker and huge brass letter-plate to match. The leaded fanlight has been painstakingly repaired, and affixed to the brickwork at the side of the door is a blue-and-white enamel number plate: a little touch of provincial France proclaiming that the owner drinks *Hirondelle Vin Ordinaire* with his *Quiche Lorraine* for his dinner and not Light Ale with his ham-and-egg pie for his tea.

The cast-iron balconies to the first floor windows are gay with geraniums and painted shiny black. Likewise the front railing, through which is visible, thanks to the enormously enlarged basement window (which has, not closed white net curtains, but a fully-retracted navy blue blind), the basement kitchen. Directly under the window is a two-bowl twin-drainer stainless steel sink with mixer taps and waste disposal unit. On each side it is flanked by formica-topped Wrighton units and the walls are clad with similar cupboards and clear-polyurethane-sealed knotty-pine matching.

We catch a glimpse of a stuffed pike in a bow-fronted glass case fixed to the chimney breast, and below this the space left by the now obsolete fire-place opening has been cunningly utilised as a mini wine cellar and is filled by a metal and beechwood bottle-rack. The dividing wall has been knocked through, an *RSJ* (Rolled Steel Joist, known in the trade as "Irish Jays") inserted and clad in the ubiquitous knotty-pine, and so the heather-brown hexagonal quarry-tile floor extends in one unbroken sweep from the kitchen sink, through the rear dining area to the hardwood sill of the large french windows which open to the patio, paved with Staffordshire blue bricks, and the garden beyond. We cannot help but notice the pine farmhouse table from Heal's, the bright red bentwood chairs from Habitat, some large gilt letters in a bold type salvaged from a Victorian grocer's shop front, and a row of large blue jars with ground glass tops, similarly salvaged from an archaic chemist's and bearing in gold lettering the abbreviated names of assorted poisons.

And so I could go on: every feature, every lick of paint, once one has learned the language, a clear statement proclaiming the presence of a frontier middle class.

THIS DECODING OF THE ENVIRONMENT, as well as providing a malicious parlour game, is now the orthodox concern of structural anthropology. When applied to housing it is particularly rewarding, for people cram an awful lot of carefully encoded information into their houses and its patterning reveals quite clearly that houses, like other communicable things such as motor cars and ash trays, are assigned to one or other of the cultural categories: *transient*, *rubbish*, and *durable*.

No great sociological insights are involved in pointing out that houses in the transient category tend to be inhabited by a sector of our society that is much concerned with respectability. From the

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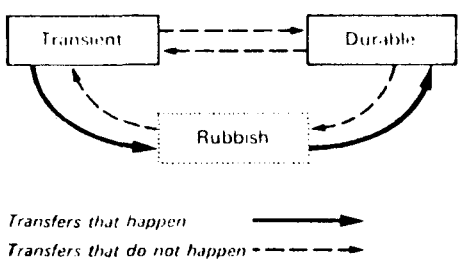
viewpoint of those who do not live in them, the inhabitants of transient houses are the dull and plodding members of the lower middle class or upper working class. Houses in the durable category would seem to be the preserve of the more exalted middle class and of the remnants of the upper class: professional men, captains of industry, large landowners and the like. The rubbish houses tend to be inhabited by what is left: the lower end of the working class, perhaps criminal, shifting, or immigrant. And then those who exist on the margins of society: the non-coping families, the mentally ill and so on.

A neat self-perpetuating system we might think: the cultural categorisation of the houses exactly matching the socio-economic divisions within the society. But to propose such a self-perpetuating system, though intellectually seductive, is to ignore the empirical data and to avoid asking the one really interesting question, which is: How can such a seemingly self-perpetuating system ever change itself? For houses sometimes transfer from one cultural category to another, and people sometimes move up or down the socio-economic ladder. Worse still, cultural categories sometimes cease to exist, and the socio-economic ladder sometimes extends itself or retracts itself as if it belonged to a fire brigade. In the later 1960s the inner suburbs of North London provided a ready-made laboratory for the study of this question, for these transfers virtually filled the social and physical arenas. There was hardly any self-perpetuation left in the system; almost all was change.

THE INTERESTING FEATURE of this category system is that membership is not fixed for all time but is to some greater or lesser extent flexible. A member of the transient category can, and usually does, gradually transfer to the rubbish category and a member of the rubbish category can, under certain conditions, transfer to the durable category. The other transfers that would complete the diagram do not happen. So, dynamically:



This then is the dynamic system of cognitive categories, and the problem now is to enquire how this cultural system can be related to the social order in such a way as to recognise that they are closely tied to one another yet, at the same time, are not in general mutually reinforcing and self-perpetuating. The arrows on the diagram, indicating those transfers that happen and those that do not, provide an obvious clue to the identity of the third and missing element between cultural and social order: control.

NO GREAT OR REVOLUTIONARY INSIGHTS are involved in the realisation that those who own and control durable objects enjoy more power and prestige than those who live entirely in a world of transience or, worse still, a world of rubbish. Similarly, when we look at examples of successful transfers of objects from rubbish to durability we see that, at the same time, their ownership is transferred from the rag-and-bone man to the knowledgeable collector—from the junk-shop window to the Bond Street showroom—from Steptoe & Son to Bevis Hillier *et al.* (ownership, of course, is just one kind of control).

The degree of control over the transfers between categories can vary widely and rapidly. Not even Mr Crossman could stem the innovative tide of the early 1960s that transformed many square miles of inner London from rat-infested slum into glorious heritage—the phenomenon now known as "gentrification." In many ways "gentrification" is an unfortunate term; for those young couples—actors, graphic designers, architects, art-school teachers, and television executives—who formed the vanguard of the frontier middle class were, we can now see with the benefit of hindsight, forceful and successful social climbers who competed (on very unequal terms) with the indigenous inhabitants of those run-down areas who, alas, had no access to durability. Something no gentleman would do (or need to do!).

Those much-satirised trendies, crashing through social barriers with the same insensitive arrogance that they knocked through the dividing walls of their terraced Georgian houses, believed themselves to be the harbingers of that egalitarian millennium where we would all end up like David Frost—classless and close-cropped, successful and suited by Cecil Gee. In the grey economic light of the 1970s, we see them consolidating their social gains with Volvo estate cars, the country life, and private schools.

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AT THE RISK OF being accused of upper-class English romanticism of the worst kind, of preaching cultural separatism, and of advocating a return to Edwardian social distinctions, I will simply state that in the mid-'60s Innominate Square, Islington, was unstably inhabited by two groups so distinct in culture, in attitudes, in behaviour, and in world-view as to constitute two separate tribes.

This is not to say that they would always remain separate: that there would be no inter-marriage, no trade-offs between the groups as they readjusted their values in the light of their inevitable interactions. "Interaction"—that optimistically egalitarian catchword of the ideologically committed sociologist—is ill-suited to describe the sort of social intercourse between these tribes who, living in different cognitive worlds, had to share the same cramped physical one. "Head-on collision" would be more appropriate. And trade-offs there indeed have been. One now cannot predict, by decoding the exterior of a house, the social identity of the occupants with anything like the accuracy that was possible only ten years ago. Distinguished baroque harpsichordists and first-generation Turkish kebab-house owners now live behind identical and adjoining façades. And old terraced houses—carefully restored on the outside and thoroughly rehabilitated inside—are now (*pace* Mr Crossman) regarded as suitable accommodation for members of both the middle *and* working classes.

THE TWO TRIBES are "the Knockers-Through" and "the Ron-and-Cliffs."

The Knockers-Through, immortalised by Alan Bennett, are often considered to be synonymous with the frontier middle class. This is not quite correct. The Knockers-Through constitute only a

Art Sales Boom in "Second-Hand Rubbish"

PRICES for Victorian and reproduction furniture and art works—items once dismissed as representing the "inferior" end of the Fine Art market—have risen remarkably in the last few years. Demand for objects which barely qualify as "antiques" has risen enormously, largely because good original period pieces are expensive and becoming increasingly difficult to find.

One London dealer summed up: "A few years ago many of these highly-priced items were dismissed as second-hand rubbish."

THE POTENTIAL *that this seemingly insatiable demand offers has not been lost on foreign suppliers. Oriental "English" items—factory-made reproduction pieces from the Far East—are now said to be appearing on the British market. At the same time, prices have at least trebled for certain items of British-produced reproduction furniture, particularly for pieces made in the 1920s, a period noted for its high quality reproduction of "period" works.*

A dealer, I am told, can count himself lucky if he can get his hands on an eight-piece set of Queen Anne-style walnut dining chairs. They now fetch around £1,500. Three years ago they would have cost between £400 and £500. A set of good quality Chippendale-style chairs which might have been "knocked down" in a sale-room for about £400, will now fetch about £1,000.

STIMULATED BY DEMANDS *from American buyers, the whole field has become a profitable growth area.*

In the last four years or so well-made Chippendale-style mahogany chairs, produced by cheap labour in Korea and India, have been appearing.

Reproduction pieces—those made from about 1900 onwards—carry the term "style" in auction catalogues. Most "country" furniture sales now have their bulky quota of such items as "Chippendale-style" cabinets, "Georgian-style" dining tables or even "19th century-style" chairs.

As the reproduced heirs of a distinguished English furniture making tradition, they now take their place in auction rooms alongside authentic period pieces and antiques. (The Government-accepted definition of an antique being items which are 100 years old or over.)

The growing business for Victorian, Edwardian, art nouveau and art deco pieces, as well as for reproduction items, is particularly evident in the flourishing auction rooms outside London, though there are sale rooms in the capital now largely devoted to this end of the trade.

ONE OF THE MOST *surprising foreign enthusiasms has been for stained glass and ecclesiastical fittings. One dealer is reported to be selling "stained glass by the mile." The Americans, it seems, use it to make room dividers and even doors for kitchen cupboards.*

Japanese buyers have been purchasing quantities of Gothic-type church fittings—altar screens, brass and wrought-iron altar rails, lecterns and carved decorations.

At an auction at Phillips last week woodworm-riddled panels, which would have landed up in a dustbin but for the dustmen's strike, were bought "for someone in Europe" for £10,500.

Keith Nurse
Arts Correspondent, DAILY TELEGRAPH

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part of the frontier middle class and there are many others, such as those who engage in meticulous but low-key restoration. However, there can be no doubt that the Knockers-Through, in their strident patronising of their indigenous neighbours (if there are any left) and their crushing insensitivity to the cognitive boundary fences of those who still persist in distinguishing between public and private, personal and impersonal, are by far the most prominent members of their class. What is more, they are surprisingly long-lived and even in the mid-'70s the diligent anthropologist could still occasionally experience the thrill of overhearing the classic remarks: "We're knocking-through, you know" and "Yes, we were the first people to come and live here."

But one can be too hard on these courageous and creative pioneers. Only ten or fifteen years after the event, architectural students to whom I teach Urban Sociology will tell me that the Knockers-Through did it for the money. This is not so. They did it for love, and from a Dr Johnson-like commitment to London; and they did it against considerable odds. This tiny band who, with little money and much faith, began restoring rubbish houses in the late '50s and early '60s were ridiculed by the staid and established members of the middle class who regarded Hampstead, Highgate, and Golders Green as the only habitable atolls in the North London Sea of Plebs. Their attitude was reflected by bank managers, estate agents, mortgage-brokers, building societies and borough architects (not surprisingly, since they are one and the same!). And so, as anyone who has ever attempted to buy a house will appreciate, a massive economic barricade was erected to keep the rubbish out: out of the durable category, that is.

Their indigenous working-class neighbours were equally unsympathetic, but for different reasons. Their response was that, in buying and doing up a rubbish house, the frontiersman was throwing good money after bad. "They're all coming down, them houses" was their endless refrain.

THESE ARE the Ron-and-Cliffs: proud, competitive, working-class, frequently self-employed, villainous, anti-union, racially-prejudiced, Conservative-voting inhabitants of rubbish or near-rubbish houses.

The origin of this not very scientific nomenclature is almost lost in the mists of unrecorded time—but not quite. The originators were two printer friends of mine who in the mid-1960s had a factory near Euston Station. The derivation is rooted in interminable archetypal conversations in the local pub—between young men with razor-cut hair dressed in Fred Perry shirts, fawn cable-knit cardigans with leather buttons, and large boots—which were always of the following type:

"Hey Ron! What you doing tonight?"
"Well Cliff, I thought I'd go down the boozer/
do an oil change on the Consul/
take the bird out down the West End."
(*aside*) "I'm sorry mate, did I spill your beer?"
"Sorry Ron. What was you saying?"
"Well Cliff. . . ."

The Knockers-Through and the staid established members of the middle class are united by a world view that clearly includes, and places a high value upon, the durable category, and are divided only as to what shall be included in that category. The Knocker-Through wants to get his rubbish house *in*: the bank manager wants to keep it *out*.

The Ron-and-Cliff has no access to durability: he is committed to a world in which there is only transience and rubbish. In consequence he can see no future except demolition for the house he has to live in.

This is a profound cultural difference which, once recognised, allows us to make sense both of the divergent behaviour of the Knocker-Through and the Ron-and-Cliff when faced with the same situation, and of the contradictory encodings that they make of their environment. And nowhere is this contradictory encoding more marked than in the Knocker-Through's and the Ron-and-Cliff's treatments of the front door—that secular icon of urban life.

THE KNOCKER-THROUGH makes his early Victorian house older by fitting a six-panelled Georgian front door with exact reproduction brass door furniture from Beardmore's and painting it either a classic dull colour such as Adam Gold or Thames Green or, better still, black or white.

His Ron-and-Cliff neighbour makes his house younger by flushing the original four-panelled door with hardboard, fitting pressed steel or brushed aluminium door furniture such as one would find on a modern private estate and in the local hardware shop, and painting it in a contemporary bright colour such as Canary Yellow or Capri Blue.

The Knocker-Through, having access to durability, is trying (successfully as it turns out) to push his house from the rubbish to the durable category. His neighbour, living in a world of transience, is trying (rather unsuccessfully) to pre-

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vent his house from sliding further down the slippery slope from the transient to the rubbish category.

THE EGALITARIANISM of a world bereft of durables can be, and in this case is, spectacularly competitive.

Along with the flushed front doors go plastic flowers, nylon net curtains, highly polished motors, and the whole well-scrubbed, sharply-dressed, cigar-smoking, fiver-waving, round-buyer bravado of the Saturday night "down the boozer." The whole business of "putting on the style"—the devotion to sport, often expensive sports like power-boat racing, duck-shooting, or trout- or shark-fishing; the gambling; the leather coats, Silver-Cross prams and elaborate hair-dos of their wives; the conspicuous consumption of drink, tobacco, sea-foods, and mohair suitings beloved by street-traders, crash-repair specialists, offset lithographers, asphalters, and self-employed central-heating engineers, carpenters, and ornamental plasterers—serves to define an aristocracy of transience, piratically scornful of those who put their trust in durables, and viciously exclusive of social rubbish. Their motto is "easy come, easy go", for in the Land of Transience the man with the highest turnover rules, OK?

The Ron-and-Cliff stands in the same relationship to our society as the Bedouin of the Euphrates Delta does to the rest of Iran.

> "The Bedouin should gain his living by the sword. All his values are those of a warrior society, in which the two dominant themes are courage and generosity. By displaying courage in war and so obtaining plunder he gains his livelihood. Through generosity he disposes of what he owns. To be mean implies a want of confidence in one's ability to gain more plunder."[4]

The secondhand-car dealer whose ageing Ford Consuls filled the front garden of a rubbish house I once considered buying was pessimistic: "All coming down, you know. All Darkies and Bubbles in them houses. Diabolical state. Cook chickens with the insides still in them. The way some people live—fucking disgusting. . . ."

The Knocker-Through and the Ron-and-Cliff, though their behaviour is widely divergent, are both perfectly rational in terms of their differing relations to the transient to rubbish to durable transfers. That is, the category system furnishes each of them with a different set of rules. But what about the despised social rubbish—the Darkies and the Bubbles? (Rhyming slang—bubble and squeak: Greek.)

They don't seem to know about the rules at all. The Greek Cypriots, in particular, are much addicted to metal-frame windows and to brick façades painted pink with all the mortar laboriously picked out in pale blue. As the transfers to durability gain momentum so Conservation Areas are designated and legislation is now contemplated forcibly to prevent the Bubble from going to this enormous trouble to knock thousands of pounds off the market value of his house. This would seem to be the thin end of a very nasty wedge. For the thick end of this attack on rubbish is the gas-oven and the elimination of those who have no place within the system. If there is one thing worse than someone painting the front of his Regency villa pink and blue, it is stopping him from painting it pink and blue.

I WOULD CLAIM that the foregoing treatment of housing in general and of the problem of slums in particular has taken us a long way from the more familiar position set out within the collective conventional wisdom of urban planners, educationists, and anti-poverty campaigners. But whither has it taken us? And, in view of the present vexed, intractable, and serious problems that are involved, what are the implications of this shift of position? Like all journeys, it is easier to tell how far one has travelled than to discover where exactly one has ended up. The distance can be measured in three ways.

1. The conventional approach assumes that objects have the qualities that they have as a result of their inherent physical properties—that these qualities are, as it were, a "given": a part of nature. The present approach avoids this assumption, and, while not denying that there *are* certain natural limits, replaces it with the notion of the social malleability of objects—the idea that objects have the qualities that they have as the result of a social process of endowment. It follows that the same forces that confer these qualities may, in changed social circumstances, withdraw them. Society giveth and society taketh away; and, in the act of giving and taking away, society is itself changed.

2. The conventional approach, like most serious thought, does not pay much heed to rubbish. The

[4] S. M. Salim, *Marsh-dwellers of the Euphrates Delta* (1962).

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attitude is that rubbish housing unfortunately exists, that this is a bad thing, that something should be done about it, that it constitutes a problem to be solved. Just as household rubbish presents a problem that is solved by refuse collection and disposal, so the first solution that comes to mind is Slum Clearance—a once-and-for-all round by the housing ash-cart, that becomes instead a permanent and expensive social service.

Having (by treating the symptoms and not the cause) failed to cure the disease, these urban doctors conclude that the disease is incurable and that it can only be arrested by regular and massive injections of cash. The present approach sees rubbish housing not in the first instance as a public health problem but as a crucial integral part of the system. Slums are social in origin but physical in manifestation. As the social nexus varies so does the physical manifestation: sometimes almost vestigial, sometimes so widespread as to become a "problem." And this is the trouble with the conventional wisdom relating to the slum: it suffers from the narrowness of all problem-oriented research. The great landscape gardener, Lancelot Brown, when confronted with a client's estate, did not say "What is your problem?", he asked "What are the capabilities of this piece of land?" Optimism, generality, and scope flowed where otherwise all would have been pessimism, specificity, and narrowness. That is what is wrong with the conventional wisdom: not enough Capability Browns and too many Problematical Toms, Dicks, and Harrys.

3. Since the conventional approach ignores the social malleability of objects, it is led away from the sort of investigations that would confirm and illuminate this malleability. The present approach places great emphasis on cognitive frameworks and in particular on *discontinuities* between cognitive frameworks. This means that where there are cultural boundaries within a society, their existence is recognised and taken into account. The conventional approach tends to ignore cultural boundaries; this approach is focused upon them.

FOR EXAMPLE, Gillian Tindall has shown how the way the inhabitants of a street in Kentish Town see that street varies spectacularly with the social context of the inhabitants.[5] The indigenous working-class inhabitants see it as on the way down because immigrants have moved in and the Knockers-Through sit with their curtains open and wash their dirty dishes at the front window. The Knockers-Through, on the other hand, committed to their restored frontages and leafy patios, see it as on the up-and-up. Significantly, she does not notice that she fails to describe how the immigrants see the street.

Now these different street-views may coexist peacefully enough in the back garden but they are inevitably in conflict in the market place. There is only one market, and either it will confirm the view that the street is on the way down (in which case houses in the street will sell for less and less money as time goes by), or it will confirm the view that the street is on the up-and-up (in which case houses will sell for more and more money as time goes by). So, in the market place, one street-view will win and the others will lose. Why is it that, in this case, the Knockers-Through win and the Ron-and-Cliffs, the Bubbles, and the Darkies lose? What sort of control mechanism lies behind this real-life Midas touch: the power to make things durable?

THE DIFFERENT WORLD VIEWS of the Knockers-Through, the Ron-and-Cliffs, and the Darkies and Bubbles correlate to widely differing patterns of investment and of sociability, which in turn reveal striking differences in control over time and space. These differences are so marked as to define three largely autonomous cultures—(***1***) a middle-class culture based upon durability which secures an extensive control over time and space; (***2***) a culture of transience with a proportionally higher investment in social relationships but with much less extensive control over time and space; and (***3***) a culture of poverty with a pathetic portfolio of investments and very little control over either time or space.

For instance, what very different world-views and what very different, yet equally realistic, expectations of events in time and space are embodied in the Curzon family motto: "*Curzon hold what Curzon held*", and in the ever-present fear of those struggling to leave the lower orders: "clogs to clogs in three generations." In other words, what I am suggesting is that the power to make things durable is a function of the relative extents of this control over time and space, and that control over time and space is secured by gaining control over knowledge. That is, it is not just physical objects but also ideas, historical facts, and systems of knowledge that are subject to social

[5] Gillian Tindall, "A Street in London", *New Society* (No. 433, 1971).

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malleability. Cars, ashtrays, and houses are only the physical tip of a huge conceptual iceberg.

AN ANECDOTE may help to clarify this point. The Ron-and-Cliff, like the Euphrates Bedouin, not only maximises turnover but must be seen to maximise turnover by constantly reaffirming his relationships through generosity. Pay night (we were always paid in the pub) was a veritable potlatch of round-buying (often £5 and in recent years as much as £15 for a single round). What is more, one could not just quietly slip the money to the barmaid and ask her to give everyone a drink. It had to be the highly ritualised performance befitting an urban warrior. First empty one's own glass while everyone else's is still half-full, then shout for the ex-boxing-champion landlord and, with him in attendance, address all one's friends and acquaintances one by one, even if they are in the other bar. ("Hey, Alf! What you drinking? Light Ale? Have a scotch!")

Another example of turnover maximisation was a "foreigner" which two of us undertook and which involved installing a mid-Victorian cast-iron grate and marble surround in the drawing-room of a Regency house belonging to an executive of a large company. The grate and surround were, in fact, from my own house (where they had been removed to make room for a kitchen). But we spun an elaborate and convincing tale about having had to buy them out of a Regency house that was being converted and so having to pass on what at the time we thought was an exorbitant price. The fireplace was quickly, but neatly, installed and we retired to the pub with our £30, well pleased with our Ron-and-Cliff piracy and at having exploited the Knocker-Through owner by convincing him that a mid-Victorian fireplace was really a Regency one.

A few weeks later, while we were doing some more work in the same house, the owner proudly showed the drawing-room to a friend who exclaimed: "Oh, isn't that splendid! Whatever you do you *must* keep that marvellous fireplace!" At that moment I realised that we were the exploited ones. The fact that we knew that the fireplace had just been installed and was of the wrong period was irrelevant, for all that matters is that those who exert the widest overall control over time and space believe it to be original. Already the value of the house had risen by very much more than £30 Credibility, not truth, is the name of this game.

IT IS TEMPTING BUT UNWISE to rush ahead and try to discover what practical implications flow from this acknowledgment of cultural boundaries and of their role in shaping our urban environment. For instance, take the dynamic phenomena of class apartheid and ghetto formation.

The interaction of the rules derived from the category system and the fixity of houses (the fact that domestic buildings, Mongolian yurts and some timber-frame houses apart, are indissolubly linked to the ground on which they stand) gives rise to the curious process, running counter to the second law of thermodynamics, whereby a completely random, disordered, mixed-up residential arrangement gradually moves towards a structured, orderly, crystallised arrangement of rich and poor ghettos.

If we accept the present fairly widely-held view that class apartheid is a bad thing and that something should be done about it, then the first thing to do is to stop all local authority projects which are virtually uniclass—for example, many new towns, huge council estates, and high-rise blocks.

Further, local authorities could take a positive approach to the problem of class apartheid by using their powers to mix up continually the crystallising process—I suggest moving Pentonville Jail to Belgravia; a fruit and veg, secondhand clothes, and junk street market in Bond Street; a transport café and lorry park in place of the proposed new hotels in the Cromwell Road; and the moving of the Bank of England to the Isle of Dogs. The ludicrous nature of these proposals indicates that these extreme procedures are probably impossible. That is, they would be trying vainly to impose flexibility upon buildings and areas that currently form part of the region of fixed assumptions. The problems of class apartheid would be nothing compared to the social problems of a world with no fixed assumptions. It is rather like suggesting beheading as a cure for migraine. Even so, more modest proposals along the same lines should prove quite feasible and, indeed, are now happening, though more from economic necessity than from free choice. We would be well advised to make a virtue of necessity and to welcome the British Museum Library in the Somers Town coal depot and the council-renovated house in the owner-occupied Georgian terrace.

ANOTHER WARNING AGAINST leaping too eagerly to practical conclusions, as a result of the recognition that slumminess is imposed by the social system, is contained in the extreme and contradictory policies that can result.

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On the one hand, the argument can run like this: that slums are socially determined; that slumminess is in the eye of the beholder; that the social system imposes slumminess on certain areas of the urban and social environment in order to maintain the *status quo*. On this argument, the slum is an instrument of oppression and the slum-dweller who accepts the judgment of non-slum-dwellers and shares *their* disgust with *his* living conditions is possessed of false consciousness and is actively conniving at his own exploitation. Rubbish theory thus provides the starting point for a revolutionary course of consciousness-raising: "you have nothing to lose but your slums."

On the other hand, one can argue like this. Rubbish is an integral and extremely important part of the category system, and in particular the existence of the rubbish category, together with the possibility of the transfer from rubbish to durable, permits the social mobility which relates our social system to changing technology and other macro-forces. This means that we cannot get rid of slums within the framework of our present social system since our present social system is the cause of the slums. So, if we wish to keep the present social system (more or less) we must accept slums (in one form or another), must realise that they will always be there and that they are a functional component of the system. So this approach supports the argument which claims that every city should have its Skid Row, its East End, its Soho, in so far as it demonstrates that we cannot get rid of this rubbish without a revolutionary change in society.

There is clearly something too simplistic about a model that ends up uniting the conservatives and the radicals (who agree on the cultural boundaries and their location within society and disagree only as to whether they are a good or a bad thing) against the liberals (who try to pretend that the boundaries are not there).[6] This simplistic model depicts nothing other than the invalid self-perpetuating system which represents the three largely autonomous cultures of the Knockers-Through, the Ron-and-Cliffs, and the Darkies and the Bubbles as persisting unchanged in their essentials (their relative control over time and space).

Instead of rushing to wild problem-oriented conclusions, it would be more sensible for those who make decisions (supposedly) on our behalf to try to find out why, in general, these cultures do not persist unchanged. They should enquire how these boundaries may shift one way or another, become more pronounced or more blurred. They should try to understand how the transactions across these boundaries, which are inevitable given that the bearers of the different cultures are members of the same society and inhabit the same physical universe, may sometimes bring about the convergence of the world views that they separate, and may sometimes add fuel to their divergence.

To enable them to do this we must look at the social control of knowledge: we must generalise the argument from ashtrays and houses to ideas. In doing this we come up against the great philosophical divide between idealists and dialectical materialists. I argue that what holds for objects also holds for ideas. Ideas, I agree, are ideally free and unconstrained but in reality they must always be generated within a social context and so will inevitably be constrained by control mechanisms. To those idealists who criticise materialists for unjustifiably putting economics, that is things, before ideas, I would reply that materialists should not be saying that things are prior to ideas but that ideas are things.

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[6] Post-mortems on the poverty programmes in the United States during the 1960s chronicle in detail the problems that await any social programme based solely upon the middle-class world view and a complete disregard for the boundaries between sub-cultures. Particularly scathing is Daniel P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding* (1969).

The programmes in the '70s that emphasise biculturalism and minority rights will probably reveal the different problems that arise from having *too much* regard for the same boundaries.

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Kenneth Minogue

Can One Teach "Political Literacy"?

Illiberal Illusions about "Activism" and Participation (or, Whatever Happened to Civics?)

THE NEWS from the polls is bad. It turns out that people are very misinformed about politics. Some think the Conservatives are the party of nationalisation, others that the IRA is a Protestant organisation. Lots of people never seem to know the name of the prime minister. Some think he was called Harold, but aren't quite sure if his other name was Wilson, or that charming Macmillan they saw on television the other night. The Dorset cottager who thinks we are still ruled by Ethelred the Unready is no doubt an eccentric, but several authenticated cases of confusion between Mrs Shirley Williams and the Virgin Mary have come to light. Whatever can be done? Fortunately, a Committee has turned up with a timely Report. The teaching profession will once more save the day by developing amongst children the subject of political literacy.

The subject of *what*? Yes, it *is* an odd expression. A tiny dwarf called "political" is trying to pass itself off as tall by riding around on the shoulders of a giant called "literacy." The inventors of this unlikely circus act are a "Hansard Society Working Party" and what they are working on is called a "Programme for Political Education." The fruits of their labours have just been published by Longman. Within the covers of this Report[1] will be found a discussion of the new concept of "political literacy", guidelines (even better, "general" guidelines) and frameworks (better yet, "overall" frameworks) and (as the pages turn) syllabic dreams of classroom adventures. The main recommendation is an expansion of political education ("a modest requirement of timetable hours", as the Report cautiously words it) and more investment in the training of teachers who can make us all politically literate; and if that doesn't wipe the smile off your face, you're incorrigibly frivolous.

NOW THE VERY FIRST ELEMENT of political literacy—its ABC, so to speak—is to recognise that nothing is quite what it seems. Here in this Report we seem to have a collection of public-spirited teachers who have discovered a dangerous void in our society where political involvement ought to be. They present us with a plan for solving the problem. The plan turns out to be a bid for money and time. It has significant costs. Teachers have for many generations encouraged debating societies and given a bit of direction to fledgling political societies after hours. The Report is in tune with the times in seeking money and professional status for a long-standing amateur enthusiasm. It is inevitable that this particular use of public money and curricular time will be disadvantageous to other competing interests. Since the main conception of a political problem found in the Report is in terms of conflict of interests, the reader may appropriately perform the function of reflexivity on behalf of the writers of these recommendations. What seems most appropriate of all is to consider the document as an exercise in persuasion.

THE PERSUADER'S trump card is to convince his audience that they don't really have any choice at all: *necessity* dictates what the persuader seeks. This old friend of an argument turns up as early as page 5:

"The question is not really whether it is done at

[1] *Political Education and Political Literacy*. Edited by BERNARD CRICK and ALEX PORTER. Longman, £3.95. The Report is by a variety of hands, but expresses a single coherent point of view. Hence there has seemed little point in distinguishing the contributions of different authors. Nor have I distinguished between the Report itself, the project papers and the other material collected in this volume.

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all, but whether it is done well or done badly. . . ."

Another old friend among these rhetorical shifts is to suggest that what is generally regarded as a matter for specialists actually concerns us *all*. And along the lines of "personal freshness matters", we get an insistence that politics is not just something that happens at Westminster, but an activity that affects everyday life. The notion that politics is about conflict, and especially conflict of interests, a notion with great appeal to the pedagogic sense of realism, threatens here to turn every family row into a demand for a constitution, negotiated settlements, free collective bargaining, a children's charter, and (to get a bit of practical work done) school assemblies to negotiate with the headmaster or headmistress. The Report is quite explicit that political literacy and autocratic Heads go ill together.

There is, however, an overwhelming problem about the whole enterprise. Teachers in schools are authorities to whom children go to learn the dates of battles, the imperfect subjunctive of irregular verbs, and how to solve quadratic equations. They are not, however, authorities on politics, because no such things exist. There used to be a vogue for a carefully deodorised version of politics to be taught in schools under the name of "civics." It was largely descriptive, and it encouraged liberal and democratic values. Educationally, it was useless, and most children were bored by it; but at least it was unpretentious, and it did little harm. The authors of this Report, however, indict it as a timid evasion of the facts of politics, like sex education limited to a recital of anatomical truths.

To say that such things are inadequate is, however, merely to recognise one of the most unfashionable and neglected of truths: that schools are very limited in what they can achieve. In politics, moreover, most people are devoutly glad of this limitation, since no one trusts children to distinguish between the kind of reliability teachers have in genuinely educational matters, and their probable foolishness in matters political, in which they have nothing that can be called knowledge, and no experience. And it is a truth on which all rational men will agree, wherever they are on the political spectrum, that there are a lot of screwballs around; and that some of them are to be found in classrooms. What is to be done when such people are licensed to guide the political opinions of their tender charges?

The report is sublimely equable about this problem. Frontal assaults, they tell us with an odd echo of the language of pornography, are not likely to be successful. Deliberate indoctrination seems more likely to cause apathy and cynicism than enthusiasm. It would be nice to see a little argument for this belief, which would undoubtedly come as news to all the Nazi and Communist indoctrinators who have not been all that unsuccessful in this century.

It would be nice, I say, to see a little argument on this point; evidence would perhaps be too much to hope for. But all we face is a blank. And this very blankness is another old friend from the repertoire of persuasive devices. If one refuses to take an objection seriously, brushing it aside with impatience as too silly to be considered, one has a good chance of bluffing a critic into thinking that it isn't a very serious objection. In fact, it is very serious indeed, and its avoidance is an object lesson in how the British pedagogue deals with realities.

Even apart from "frontal assaults" of doctrine, the Report does not get the question right. The National Front teacher who spends his time in an exegesis of Gobineau and Rosenberg is one thing; the engineering of attitudes by way of sneering asides about darkies is another thing altogether. If a teacher is adept at this kind of communication he will often carry his pupils with him. And so can any other hot gospeller in the schools—able to convey by sneer and derision what he thinks is a respectable attitude, and what he thinks is too silly for any intelligent person to consider. In this way, whole ranges of possible thoughts have often been made, as it were, "radioactively" sterile, for many children, for many years. Even the best educators sometimes have this effect. The worst can turn the mind into a devastated area.

IN GENUINELY EDUCATIONAL subjects, those in which children learn a discipline of thought having clear criteria of what counts as a good reason, the question of balance or neutrality does not arise. Teachers do not have to guard against "bias" as they teach Latin, physics, or mathematics. Aesthetic judgment in English is not decisive in the same way, but nothing extrinsic to education threatens to swamp an appreciation of the qualities of *Hamlet* or the "Ode to a Nightingale." And even the dangers of dottiness in modern history are at least limited, however loosely, by considerations of evidence. But the subject of politics combines a maximum of sinister, interested, outside interference with a minimum of agreed criteria of sound judgment.

This does not, indeed, make it unimportant; but

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it does make it a dubious subject for schools, in which the point of the exercise is training people how to think by immersing them in educationally worthwhile forms of thought. Vast quantities of political discourse consist of worthless and dishonest waffle. Children may have to encounter it at some point, and some may even develop a taste for it, but it is the very last kind of discourse which can stand as an example of clear and critical thinking. And it is necessary to report that these particular teachers of politics, who must be regarded as models of what the subject might be, the *crême de la crême*, as it were, are not always as clear and critical as they might be.

It is obvious that classrooms are as attractive to people with messages as harems might be to Don Juan. How, then, do we formulate the moral responsibilities of a man of strong political opinions who finds himself in charge of a class? The Report formulates the question in terms of the voguish word "neutrality." It does indeed have fears that there may be "gross bias" in the classroom, and thinks that the teacher ought to criticise his own bias and to compensate for it in his teaching. The few words on this theme are a good deal less thunderous than the imposition of a clear duty to

The Sense of Metaphor (I): Carter's "New Foundations"

Washington

PRESIDENT CARTER'S new slogan was coined at a brainstorming session of speech writers the week before Thanksgiving, and then almost forgotten until it was resurrected to become the theme of the State of the Union speech.

The slogan, "New Foundation," was suggested by Rick Herzberg. From the start, no one was really satisfied with it.

"Nobody said, 'That's it—we can sell it to the American people,'" recalls Walter Shapiro, special assistant, who was at the meeting. "Everyone said, 'Can't we come up with something better?'"

The night before, the president, asked by Bill Moyers in a television interview to state the "single theme" of his administration, was unable to do so. His answer was an obscure reference to Kierkegaard.

The group agreed that the slogan needed two words, the first of which should be "new," as in "New Deal," "New Frontier" and "New Freedom." At one point, the word "improved" was substituted for "new," and the words "groundwork" and "building blocks" were considered.

Gerald Rafshoon, the president's director of communications, and Greg Schneiders, who is Mr Rafshoon's deputy, feared that a catchall theme would be artificial. Thus, "New Foundation" was never mentioned to them. The president was not pleased; "The president spoke of the difficult nature of the problems we face now, of the difficulty in developing long-term solutions."

Mr Mondale stressed a need to "articulate what was unique in the Carter approach." An aide stressed that "many of the things we had already done were long-term in nature."

Speech writers next revived the theme of a "New Foundation," which an approving White House official said fit Mr Carter "like a glove." The president consented.

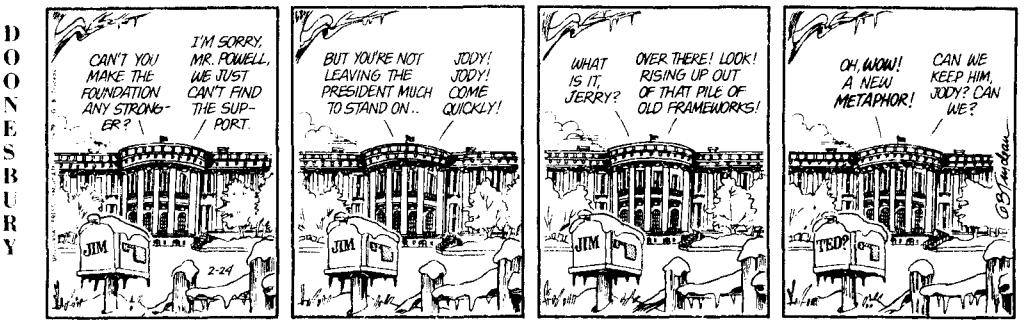
Mr Herzberg sat in the House of Representatives as the president gave a speech that unveiled the new slogan. He sat next to the Chinese ambassador, whose aide translated the speech. The ambassador seemed impassive.

NEW YORK TIMES

Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan has suggested that the "New Foundation" catch phrase in President Carter's recent State of the Union speech has an extremely interesting history. The "New York Democrat" wrote to "The Washington Post" over the weekend to point out that the phrase appears in the first stanza of the Communist Internationale, which, Moynihan says, was "from 1918 to 1943 the national anthem of the Soviet Union." As he quotes it:

No more tradition's chain shall bind us
Arise, ye slaves! No more in thrall!
The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught, we shall be all.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE


DOONESBURY
CAN'T YOU MAKE THE FOUNDATION ANY STRONGER?
I'M SORRY, MR. POWELL, WE JUST CAN'T FIND THE SUPPORT.
JIM
2-24
BUT YOU'RE NOT LEAVING THE PRESIDENT MUCH TO STAND ON..
JODY! JODY! COME QUICKLY!
JIM
WHAT IS IT, JERRY?
OVER THERE! LOOK! RISING UP OUT OF THAT PILE OF OLD FRAMEWORKS!
JIM
OH, WOW! A NEW METAPHOR!
CAN WE KEEP HIM, JODY? CAN WE?
TED?

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avoid bias—a duty such as we might expect to be invoked for a profession, such as teaching, which is not tethered even by such a thing as a Hippocratic oath. A quiet invocation of the idea of professionalism is all we get. These widely acceptable sentiments are undercut, however, by a rather bolder theme:

> "Neutrality is not to be encouraged: to be biased is human and to try and unbias people is to emasculate them."

There is something "politic" in the bad sense about combining pious advice about the need for fair-mindedness with the suggestion that every red-blooded he-man will let his biases rip. The latter suggestion will find support (and is indeed supported in the Report) in the currently fashionable pop epistemology which jumps from the logical characteristics of observation (that it invariably involves selection) to the conclusion that, since "everybody is biased" or non-neutral, everybody can be as happily partisan as they like.

The question posed in terms of the misleading idea of neutrality is, of course, one of the central problems of the entire project. Educational discourse has no problem with neutrality because its material does not resolve itself into a choice between competing policies about which one might be either partisan or neutral. But politics is a maze of *pros* and *contras*, in which every humble little fact seems to take its place in some scheme of *pro* or *contra*. Hence the nearest thing a teacher of politics can get to educational remoteness is a kind of controlled oscillation between *pro* and *contra*. It is not merely the only way; it is also required, as a sheer matter of the practical politics of getting the Report implemented, that all political groups be offered equal bites at the cherry. The writers of the Report cannot help but recognise at times that oscillating between *pro* and *contra* is but a thin caricature of the genuine remoteness of educational subjects; but what they do not recognise is that a teacher in a classroom with a captive audience is exercising a form of pedagogic monopoly which makes genuine freedom of discussion impossible. For the condition of freedom in politics is not some set of guidelines about informational neutrality; it is the competitiveness which makes it easy for people with different policies to disseminate them. And that competitiveness is precisely what the classroom prohibits. Neutrality, then, must carry the burden. When it can no longer bear the strain, its employers in this Report toss it away like a squeezed lemon. Its flavour lingers on, however, in the meticulous balancing act performed by the Report in not favouring either of the two *pros* and *contras* it conceives to be the issues of contemporary politics.

WORKING-CLASS SOLIDARITY, for example, is juxtaposed against something called "middle-class moderation." When the badness of an operation called "imposing theory before issues are understood" is illustrated, the three names of theorists used in exemplification are "Burke, Adam Smith or Karl Marx" who, unsuitable as they may be for the exercise since they are radically different *kinds* of theorist, are none the less recognisable standard-bearers for the three main points of some people's political spectra.

> "We would reject the assumptions of those whether of Left or Right [the Report fearlessly tells us] who would have only the correct attitudes taught."

And immediately "socialisation" (presumably thought to be Left) is juxtaposed against "tradition" (thought to be Right). This is indeed neutrality of a sort, though a very mechanical sort; and the reader who was enraged by the bold general remarks about neutrality may find himself soothed in the exemplification. Whether this kind of mechanical seeing "both-sides-of-the-question" (rather than analysing the very terms in which those familiar "both" sides are constituted) constitutes a form of education is the point on which attention should focus.

We are, however, far from having exhausted the difficulties arising from the question of neutrality. For the kind of attitude here called "neutrality" is, by a common sort of misunderstanding, thought to be essential to the academic validity of politics as a subject to be taught in schools. And given such an assumption, "political literacy" cannot be taught in schools, as civics and religious education have often been taught, as a set of communal beliefs *we* all share, or which by being taught may reveal to us *our* way of thinking and acting. Thus, religious education used to be an induction into Christianity; but exactly the same sort of misguided attempt to turn it into an academic subject, such as we find in the present Report, is now turning it into "comparative religion." Similarly, there might be some case for teaching children the way *we* engage in the activity of politics. To do this would be to embrace a belief that it is better, at least for us, to have a free press, regular elections, an independent judiciary, and all the rest. But this

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possibility is rejected—and it is worth noting the significantly confused way in which it is rejected.

"IT would be wrong", we are told,

> "to define a politically literate person as someone who necessarily shares all values of Western European liberalism. That would be indeed a curious up-dating of the Whig interpretation of history into present-day political education."

We might note, as we pass, the pedagogic display of a bit of flashy and irrelevant erudition. This particular bit of erudition is not only irrelevant but sophistical. What is wrong with the "Whig interpretation of history" is that it is a political position distorting historical understanding; but there is nothing at all wrong with Whig politics, the teaching of which has no necessary connection at all with the Whig interpretation of history. Not all Whigs are bad historians.

The wider issue arising from this remark is, however, the fact that if politics is to be taught at all in schools, there is very little else it can be (apart from ideological indoctrination) except an assertion of what is here called "the values of Western European liberalism." Where else can its values come from? The Moghuls of India? Confucian China? Genghis Khan? Tribal societies? And in fact the Report does stumble to just this conclusion, except that, having extruded Western European liberalism through the front door, it allows the same thing back through the back window in the form of a tasteless consommé called "procedural values" which it is the business of the teacher to espouse. These values are called Freedom, Toleration, Fairness, Respect for Truth, and Respect for Reasoning. They are in many respects admirable, and in various combinations have no doubt been found in many places at many times. But there is no doubt that this version of them is unmistakably a rather bald summary of what a liberally minded Briton has taken away from his reading of his history.

Training people in political literacy is, then, a training in a liberalism which has exchanged its strong patriotic roots for a mess of educational neutrality understood to have resulted from academic hygiene.

But this is liberalism with its hands tied behind its back. It is no doubt an excellent set of values for those engaged in discussion with other liberals; but like the guns of Singapore, it is a defence against attack from the wrong quarter. One important 20th-century problem is that argument between Western politicians has an entirely different character from, for example, argument between Stalin and Trotsky, Hitler and Captain Röhm, or Mr Teng and Madame Mao. In all the latter cases, the argument is mere froth in a deadly game of power, and the losers usually end up dead. Given that we live in a dangerous world full of power-hungry exponents of ideological truth whose aim it is to do away with degenerate bourgeois shams like parliaments and a free press, the politically literate man begins to reek of Kerensky and the Weimar Republic. It is all like going into a lion's cage to stroke the nice pussy-cat.

BUT PERHAPS A BIT OF DANGER is just what the Report favours. It is mortally affeared that people won't take an interest in politics, and hence it seeks to meddle with the character as well as the minds of its pupils.

> "The ultimate test of political literacy lies in creating a proclivity to action, not in achieving mere theoretical analysis."

This utterance merely summarises a moral doctrine which underlies the whole Report. At one point, this desirable proclivity to activity is advanced as the Aristotelian mean between passivity on the one hand and rebellion on the other. Among the more bizarre recurrences of this general doctrine may be cited the remark:

> "Socrates was a good man—who broke the law; so did Jesus . . . ."

It is a remark which disposes of Plato and the Gospels in one brisk Liberationist *putsch*; it must constitute a milestone in scholarly revisionism. But perhaps the best clue to the significance of these remarks is a line about "a passive and deferential population, who think of themselves as good subjects and not active citizens." Now the *O.E.D.* takes DEFERENCE to be "courteous regard, as one to whom respect is due." How, then, can courtesy get tangled up in this grotesque doctrine about the excellence of activity and the badness of passivity?

The cause is no doubt to be found in Bagehot's idea of the "deference vote" in British politics, which has haunted the corridors of political science in the form of a caricature of forelock-tugging peasants moronically convinced that only their Eton-educated masters know how to rule. This piece of nonsense has the useful role of explaining away the fact that the lower classes do not always vote for reforming or revolutionary parties. The Tory working-man could be patronised as a "deference voter."

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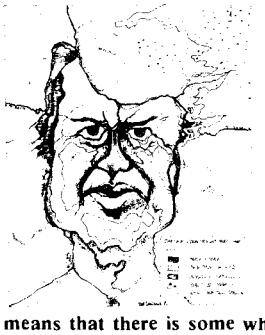
Now the question of why people vote as they do is profoundly mysterious, and it is not at all to be confused with the answers people may give to interviewers who ask them for the reasons why they vote one way or another. As with much else in politics, things are not always what they seem, including motives. But on one important such point, most people are more realistic than the authors of this Report. Most people regard politics as a spectator sport, in which the main actors are office-holders or those actively bidding for office. This Report, however, is keen to foster the illusion that politics, like voting and chatting in pubs, is fundamentally participant—cheering and booing are actually taken as politics itself. Now while it is true that no one is necessarily excluded from politics, it is also true that most people will never really take part in politics. It is an activity only for people either with the taste for it, or with very great determination. Any other view is demagogic flattery.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRESUPPOSITION of the Report is, then, a belief in a mode of human conduct called "activity", and it is from this that the muddles about neutrality which I have already discussed take their source. For *neutrality* cannot help appearing, when caught in the upper and nether millstones of the kind of ratiocination displayed here, as a form of the dreaded *passivity*. Hence, too, *deference* as a form of courtesy disappears from sight because it has been identified with *servility*. Now a culture which misappropriates the vocabulary of courtesy in order to express its disapproval of servility (for which there are plenty of available resources) will turn itself into a breeding ground for quarrelsome bores, and it is the latter type of person who seems likely to emerge as the actual prototype of the politically literate man. For if I discuss law with Lord Denning, or astrophysics with Sir Martin Ryle, on the non-deferential assumption that I know just as much about these subjects as they do, then I shall become very tiresome indeed. No classroom, to bring the matter closer to home, could possibly function unless the children in one way or another deferred to the teacher as a teacher. None of this means, of

The Sense of Metaphor (II):



THE MORE ONE CONtemplates all of Carter's pronouncements in the past two years, the more it seems that his weakness is a lack of any sense of metaphor. What does one mean by "metaphor" in this context? Clearly one is not talking of it in the strictest sense. One means that there is some whole sense of history, the world, even life, if one likes, which enables the passing moment, its issues and its challenges to be put in place, and so that their significance can be seen and recognised.

THE LACK OF *an historical view, a world view, a life view, means also the lack of a strategic view. Bismarck had no interest in acquiring a few colonies for Germany. That was not where the issue for Germany would be settled. But the colonial enthusiasts in the 1880s forced his hand. When one of them came running to him with a map of Africa, showing where Britain and France and Belgium were carving up the dark continent, Bismarck listened and then said that the enthusiast's map of Africa was indeed impressive. "But my map of Africa is here in Europe. Here is Russia and here is France, and here are we between them. That is my map of Africa." That remark is brimful of metaphor: history, knowledge, experience, strategy; a sense of destiny, a sense of limit. "My map of Africa is Europe." One has no equivalent sense that Carter and his administration have the foggiest idea why America should re-establish full relations with China. Perhaps it should. That's not my concern. But there is not one memorable remark in any of his pronouncements to tell us why he thinks that his map of America is there in China. It may be. But why?*

WHEN THE younger Pitt said after Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz, "Roll up that map of Europe, it will not be wanted these ten years," he indicated in a nutshell the size of the upheaval that had taken place. When Edward Grey said at the outbreak of the First World War "The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime," he grasped in one phrase the collapse of a world order. When Winston Churchill spoke of Italy and therefore the Balkans as "the soft underbelly of the Axis," he was pointing to a strategy that might have saved Eastern Europe from the Russians, just as when he spoke of the "Iron Curtain," he was pointing to the fact that Eastern Europe had been already swallowed and Western Europe had better face the danger to itself. The phrases are not memorable just because they are vivid. It was not a gift for rhetoric that gave them birth, but an ability to see great events with the eye of metaphor, to use knowledge and

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course, that the remarks of the one deferred to are to be taken as necessarily gospel truth; but if some sort of circumstantial pre-eminence were not given to people in conversations, then conversations would never get going in the first place.

The word "deferential" carries a heavy freight of disapproval which, like many corruptions of our language (such as that of "disinterested", for example), threatens to rob us of one of the essential conceptions of civility. Even more fundamental to the line of argument of this Report is the transformation of the idea of *activity*. Through the slow revolvings of thought, by which sparks of meaning pass from connotation to connotation, a new meaning of the word seems to be slowly evolving. Being active and being passive (or quiet, silent, reflective) used to be two manners of behaviour available to human beings, each valuable in its own way. Now however, "activity" has come to be identified with essential humanity, while passivity is identified with the character of a thing. (Hence the notion of a "sex object.") To be "fully human" means to strive to get one's way, especially in politics.

The change of meaning is a leap from one peripheral meaning to another, and the result is a somersault in which the idea turns into its opposite. A collection of people wanting houses, for example, or more money, think themselves most active when they band together in a demonstration which will induce other people to give it to them. But in fact, of course, such behaviour is peculiarly passive (in the bad sense) because it is dependent. It is a demand for wealth sundered from the creation of wealth. One genuinely active response to such a situation might be to build the houses for themselves, as people have so often done before. By a similar transformation, downing tools in a strike or a go-slow comes to be described as "industrial action." The result is not merely paradoxical, it is surrealistic; and a whole generation of simple-minded people have come to believe that they are being supremely active and courageous in taking part in mass demonstrations, which is precisely where both activity and courage are lacking. Now that all the serious Nazis are dead, for example, some thousands of sheep, who would not have said

Pitt, Bismarck, Roosevelt & Others

experience to place events under the eye of history. In two years neither Carter nor his administration has uttered one remark that helps to answer either of the two urgent questions: where the true interests of America lie and what are the real resources it has to deploy. It is not enough to speak of the limits of American power when that power is still huge and cannot help forcing choices.

"Where will America fight?" may seem too provocative a question. But at least "Where will America resist?" is a question the world can expect to be answered. Isolated responses to individual events are not a sufficient answer. They are no guide to the future intentions of America.

THIS LACK OF METAPHOR **is in all Carter's pronouncements on every issue. To talk of the energy crisis as the "moral equivalent of war" is to abandon metaphor for a weak comparison that is convincing to no one. What is it that America has to fight for or against, that it is expected to exert or deny itself as in war? When Roosevelt bellowed in his first inaugural address, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he put the fight against unemployment and poverty onto a level that all could grasp. Carter would have said, "We must not be afraid," the point thus lost. What is more, one feels that Roosevelt's remark came out of strong personal experience, that he had known fear. The more one ponders Carter and most of his advisers in the White House, the more one feels that in Georgia all the great events of the past just washed over them. They had responses, no doubt, always responses. But where's the hurt? Where are the lessons?**

The language has to come from somewhere, where the people also have been. In the address at Gettysburg, Lincoln reached to the language of the Bible—"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth"—because it was still the language of the people, appropriate to them on such an occasion.

BUT OUT OF WHAT *came Carter's immediately forgotten appeal, in his State of the Union message of 1978, to make America a "beloved community"? It was an attempt to find a metaphor. But to what did the metaphor refer in American experience or in America now? One does not blame the speechwriters, because the man himself must be the real source. What other serious American politician ever would have offered a government "as good and honest, decent and truthful, competent and compassionate, and as filled with love, as are the American people"? The American people must be considered to know themselves better than that. Of course the real flaw in such an evocation is that the government offered is to be no better than the people. What is there to consecrate or hallow if the highest to be found is the lowest common denominator?*

Henry Fairlie

in THE NEW REPUBLIC *(Washington, D.C.)*

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boo! when it mattered to do so, imagine themselves to be lions. It is much harder today to cross a picket line; and correspondingly less common.

There is the occasional disclaimer: though the politically literate are allowed the bracketed alternative of "positive refusal to participate", they would have a hard time beating an apathy rap. But the Report finds a great variety of ways of encouraging exactly the sort of ill-considered reforming activism which has been the curse of Britain over the last quarter-of-a-century. Political literacy appears as a struggle against strong tendencies towards passive "quietism" in Britain today. The actual situation is that there is hardly anything in Britain today, from local government to the Health Service, but has been in a continuous ferment of hyperactivism. A horde of reformers has been zealously setting about education at every level during this period, and has transformed the school system, not very obviously for the better. There are, it seems, no less than 50 different *A*-level mathematics syllabuses available currently, with obvious problems for those going into higher education. Far from passivity being the problem it appears in this report, it is rather a proneness to activism which keeps the British in a condition of permanent administrative twitching. "Activity", one might well say, has become the neurotic's protection against activity.

IT IS THUS the final irony arising from the Report's attempt to teach an academically pure form of politics that it should fail to comprehend its own most important partiality. For in seeking to encourage activism, it can raise its eyes innocently to the skies and point out that it is encouraging "a proclivity to activity", irrespective of the aims to which that activity should be put. But political activism is, as we have seen, peculiarly appropriate as an instrument by which a dependent population dramatises a claim on public resources. We might almost say that the traditional forms of our political life, revolving round elections and constituencies, constitute one form of modern politics, while street demonstrations constitute another. While purporting to be neutral, then, the Report mobilises a set of arguments liable to encourage little but the production of demonstration fodder.

Camber Castle Restored

That spinster castle
Out there in the marsh
Died centuries ago—
In bed:

Not properly manned,
Never beseiged.
And nothing to defend now
But implacable maidenhead.

There are people and random bones,
Around the world, not labelled
"Begotten here"; and now,
The archives of generations

Of owls stripped with the ivy.
It is being "restored"
To something it hardly was:
A Tudor Rose

In a shrewd contractor's hat,
A monument only
Of men in Ministries
One would prefer to forget.

Patric Dickinson

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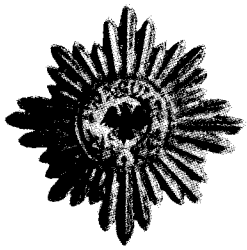
Sebastian Haffner

Prussia & Frederick the Great

An Historical Essay



"THE KING is the first servant of the state (*der König ist der erste Diener des Staates*)": these words of Frederick the Great are well-known. What is not so well-known is that the King of Prussia, who spoke and wrote French more often and better than he did German, originally said "*domestique*" and not "*serviteur*"—"*le premier domestique de l'état*", the first flunkey of the state. That sounds very different and reminds us of another of Frederick's remarks: "How I detest this work to which the blind accident of my birth has condemned me! . . . "

Frederick was by nature an aesthete, a philosopher (today he would probably be called an "intellectual") and a humanist. This explains the terrible conflict he had during his time as Crown Prince with his father, the pious, good-natured Frederick William I, who in the service of his state had become the mean, hard-hearted "Soldier King." The King's son loathed his uniform at first—later it was to be his exclusive dress—and called it a "death-frock (*Sterbekittel*)."

The flute-playing, the love of art, the anti-Machiavellianism positively oozing with philanthrophy, the enthusiastic friendship with Voltaire, the rash humanitarian concessions when he assumed power—the abolition of torture (with exceptions); "The Newspapers must not be interfered with"; "In my state everyone can seek salvation after their own fashion"—all this is not a mask or a generous mood, this is the real Frederick, his original character. He sacrificed it to the "detestable work" to which he saw himself condemned—to put it more precisely, to the Prussian notion of the state, the *Staatsräson*, which demanded of him that he engage in power-politics, that he wage war, fight battles, seize territory, break alliances and treaties, forge money, get the utmost out of his subjects and his soldiers and not least out of himself—in short—that he be the *König von Preussen*.

Consequently, he grew bitter. He did not become a tyrant like his father, but he did become an icy cynic, a malicious tormentor to those around him, loving no man, loved by no man, sullen and indifferent towards his own person, unkempt, unclean, always in the same worn-out uniform, still brilliant, but filled now with an inconsolably nihilistic spirit, deeply unhappy below the surface; yet at the same time never idle, always at work, always on duty, indefatigably discharging his detestable work, a great King to his dying breath—with a broken soul.

ONE TENDS TO BE REPELLED by first impressions of Frederick; but when one studies him in more depth, one does fall under his spell, and he evokes a feeling which one cannot call love, but which is possibly stronger than love. The same is true of his state—the state he and his father created. A crudely-fashioned rational state, without the charm of Austria, the elegance of Saxony, the natural traditions of Bavaria, one might even say (paraphrasing Robert Musil): *ein Staat ohne Eigenschaften*, a state without qualities. And yet, as they say in Prussia, "not without its good points (*nicht ohne*)." A state where concern for the Army and the need for military efficiency to guarantee survival determined all financial, economic and social policies (rather modern and progressive for their time) as well as the degree of humanity.

The Army swallowed up the state budget; so higher taxes were necessary; higher taxes however needed a growing economy; so economic development was encouraged. Economic growth however meant an increase in the population, so immigration was tolerated; and if this happened to be humanitarian into the bargain (by helping the oppressed Protestants in France and Austria), so

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much the better. Classical Prussia and its great King, who governed it from 1740 to 1786, did not arouse enthusiasm abroad so much as aversion—but it did win respect. Even if Frederick the Great did risk the state and military power his father had built up, he was lucky; he won his big gamble.

Frederick took Silesia away from the Austrians and West Prussia from the Poles—both without any legal or moral pretext—and in doing so finally gave his state a connected body of territories. His truly great achievement, however, was that he managed to defend his Silesian prize in the Seven Years War against a coalition of three great European powers, Austria, France and Russia; an achievement which actually went far beyond the military capabilities of the still small and impoverished state of Prussia. It was this achievement that first enabled Prussia to take its place in the circle of major European powers, albeit as the last and least of its members.

PRUSSIA, both in its creation and in its rise to greatness, is wholly the child of the European epoch between the Thirty Years War and the French Revolution. In no other period could this state have had such a stunning career. Previously there had only been two real powers in Europe. All the other states had to line up on one side of the long-term conflict between these two: the Habsburgs and the French Bourbons. But for the 140 years since 1648 the Continent had resembled a stock exchange where the shares of power were continually fluctuating. There was always a war being fought somewhere. In this period war was almost the normal state of affairs. For ordinary citizens at any rate, this was a more or less tolerable state of affairs, because it was only the armies that waged war. It was only to be expected that with so many wars being fought, provinces and countries would continually change hands.

Against this background Frederick's plundering of foreign countries does not look quite so spectacular as it would if judged according to present-day practices. Prussia was doing no more in Silesia and West Prussia than France had done in Alsace, Sweden in Pomerania, Bavaria in the Pfalz, and others had done or were doing elsewhere And moreover, in the case of West Prussia, there was the excuse that Prussia really did need this connecting piece between Pomerania and East Prussia. Admittedly it did not need Silesia. With its annexation Prussia pushed forward into regions over which it really had no claim. Silesia had belonged under the Bohemian crown to Austria for centuries, and Austria at the bottom of its heart was never to forgive its loss. With this lasting enmity Frederick encumbered his state with a heavy burden which far outweighed the territorial gain.

Why did he do it? As everyone knows, it was more or less the first thing he did. He came to the throne in the summer of 1740. In December he summoned his armies to Silesia "to a rendezvous with glory." Why?

THE VAGUE CLAIMS of heritary entitlement which he could make at best were too thin to be taken seriously even as a motive let alone as a justification. His own explanations at the time are outrageous. He wrote in a letter in 1740:

> "The satisfaction of knowing my name would be in the newspapers and later in the history books, seduced me into doing it. . . ."

And a year later in a draft of *A History of My Times*:

> "The possession of battle-ready troops, a well-filled state treasury and a lively disposition: these were the real reasons which moved me to war."

But one must not take this entirely seriously. Self-irony and self-mockery were part of Frederick's character. For his real reasons for waging war were in fact somewhat more serious. What "seduced" him was a uniquely favourable opportunity.

The reigning Habsburg had died in October 1740 without a male heir. The succession of his daughter Maria Theresa to the throne was open to dispute—or at least recognition of her should not be without its price: Silesia, for example. And why not first take the price demanded and negotiate later after gaining possession? The opportunity was favourable because in 1740 Silesia was stripped of all Austrian troops. Austria had only just ended a rather unfortunate war with the Turks with a rather unfortunate peace settlement. Frederick wrote in *A History of My Times*: "After the conclusion of this peace, the Austrian army was in a totally disorganised state. . . . The army was both exhausted and disheartened. After the peace settlement most of its troops remained in Hungary." So for the time being Austria was clearly in a state of military defencelessness and open to political blackmail. Frederick could not resist the opportunity of making such an enormous territorial gain.

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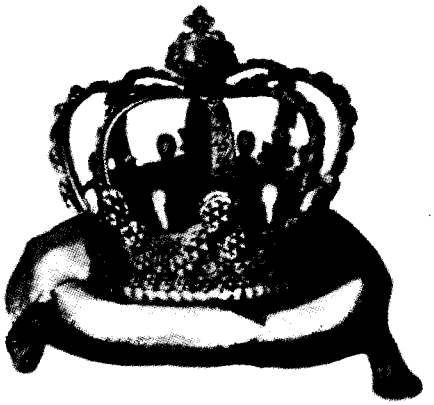
That is far from political morality, and one cannot call it politically far-sighted either. But that is how things were done in the 18th century. It is significant that in the War of Austrian Succession, which Frederick's raid unleashed, it was not the victim Austria, but the aggressor Prussia which immediately found allies: France, Bavaria, and Saxony. They all wanted to exploit this momentary weakness of Austria. The fact that Prussia had openly exploited it to seize territory did not in the least deter them from joining forces.

IN FACT IT WAS Frederick who a year-and-a-half later left his allies in the lurch with a cynical smile and unscrupulously agreed to the separate peace settlement, when Austria, under pressure, conceded to him its rights over Silesia. Then when Austria subsequently began to gain the upper hand again over the coalition of countries which had been weakened by Frederick's withdrawal, Frederick broke the freshly concluded peace treaty in the same cold fashion in which he had made it and declared war again in 1744, only to break his alliance with the coalition for the second time in 1745, when Austria once again ate humble pie. The Austrian War of Succession finally ended in 1748 after eight fruitless years for all the participants—except for Prussia who already had her sheep safely in the fold. A French diplomat remarked at the



time: "*Nous avons tous travaillé pour le roi de Prusse* (We have all been working for the king of Prussia)...."

THAT IS HOW things were done politically in those days. Frederick's Silesian policy was undoubtedly unscrupulous power-politics, but *skrupellose Machtpolitik* was the style of the period. This is made even more apparent by the so-called First Partition of Poland in which he subsequently took West Prussia. The fact that in 1772 in peace-time three great powers simply agreed to cut three convenient pieces off a country that lay between them, was not seen as a monstrous act at the time. Whether the author of the idea was originally Russia or Prussia is still disputed today. Maria Theresa of Austria, who to begin with still had a few scruples, then also decided to get in on the act, so as not to end up empty-handed. Frederick commented: "*Sie weinte, aber sie nahm*: (She wept, but she took her share....)"

A characteristic comment. Frederick the Great was a cynic. He was no more unscrupulous than other politicians of his day, but he differed from them in that he did not disguise his unscrupulousness. On the contrary, he actually took pleasure in openly calling his deeds by the nastiest terms he could find for them. It is difficult to say whether he did this out of mere vainglory or out of inner desperation over his "detestable work." But as a politician Frederick's cynicism presented him with a handicap, and together with his recklessness in the Seven Years War it nearly cost him his neck. He was not a great or masterful politician. His greatness lay elsewhere.

Frederick was intelligent, inventive and many-sided, with not only political and military talents, but literary and musical gifts as well. He was not actually a genius in any one particular field: but rather a highly-gifted dilettante in an unusual number of fields. Just as his thoroughly respectable musical compositions never came close to the greatness of Bach, and his still highly readable writings never achieved the level of Voltaire, as a politician and strategist he never possessed the "ingenious" penetrating insight and the sureness of touch which mark out the greatest. On the contrary: time and again, at least in the first half of his long reign, Frederick was a decided opportunist, a *Hasardeur*.

DURING THIS PERIOD he acquired the double glory due to a successful statesman and a victorious general. For the Germans of the later Prussian *Kaiserreich* he seemed to embody Chancellor Bismarck and Field Marshal Moltke in a single person. But Frederick emerges unfavourably in such a comparison. Bismark's wars and Moltke's campaigns, whatever else may be said about them, are absolute masterpieces of planning and execution. Bismarck never began a war with-

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out first carefully isolating his opponent and putting him in the wrong. Frederick carelessly put himself in the wrong in his three Silesian wars; in the Seven Years War he foolhardily attacked a vastly superior coalition from a position of isolation. In every war, Bismarck knew from the beginning how he could reach peace again with advantage; Frederick never did. He just gambled.

Here the general and the statesman were one. Moltke's campaigns are methodically worked out, carefully deliberated operations. Frederick's battles are, with few exceptions, strategic improvisations, and often desperate gambles. After the defeat at Kunersdorf (1759), Prussia's position was hardly less desperate than it was to be 47 years later after Jena. The fact that the state did not collapse after Kunersdorf, as it did after the defeat by Napoleon, is only partly Frederick's own doing.

He only really acquired the title "the Great" (*Friedrich der Grosse*) in the last three long and terrible years of the Seven Years War, not through any genius, but through extreme steadfastness, resilience, and imperturbability when all hope seemed lost. He possessed an unlimited stoic capacity for suffering, an inner deadness which resisted every blow of fate. This king, who had begun as a frivolous "darling of fortune" (his expression, *Schosskind des Glücks*), showed in misfortune the bearing of a Red Indian being martyred at the stake. Therein lies his true grit. The fact that greatness was finally rescued and rewarded by a stroke of fortune—a new monarch succeeding to the Russian throne and shifting Russia's alliances—in no way detracts from it.

BUT IT IS TIME to take a somewhat closer look at the history of the Seven Years War. This war, the show-piece of "Prussia's Glory", is so overgrown with myths that one can barely perceive its true course any more. The Germans of the 20th century have oriented themselves around these myths in two World Wars—with terrible consequences, as we know.

First, the events leading up to the war. The outbreak of war was preceded by what people at the time called a "diplomatic revolution", a somersault-like turn-about in the traditional system of alliances. Prussia had achieved its conquest of Silesia in alliance with France, and since that time the Franco-Prussian partnership and the enmity between France and Austria had become permanent fixtures.

But things did not stay that way. The old continental rivalry of France and Austria was increasingly superseded by a new rivalry between France and England, with highly urgent disputes to settle in America, Canada and India. Frederick underestimated this new constellation when he sealed the treaty of Westminster with England in January 1756. He miscalculated in two respects. He hoped England would divert Russia from its long-standing alliance with Austria or at least hold it in check—a vain hope; and he calculated that France's opposition to Austria was intractable. But there he was mistaken; France took offence. And that gave Austria the chance to bury its old feud with France and to ally itself in turn with France against Prussia: the second "diplomatic revolution" of the year 1756.

Austria had never resigned itself to the loss of Silesia. Its alliance with Russia had already served to prepare the way for a future reconquest. The new Triple Alliance of Austria-France-Russia could broaden its aims even further: the reduction of Prussia to the March of Brandenburg; and the distribution of the rest of its possessions amongst the allies. Why shouldn't Prussia be divided up just as Poland was later on?

FREDERICK'S SITUATION was serious. His new ally England was a long way off, the prospective English theatres of war lay even further away—in India and Canada. He had to cope with three opponents single-handed, every one of which was stronger than he was.

He decided on a preventive war. But—with characteristic "Fritzian" audacity—he made at one and the same time a war of conquest out of the preventive war. Frederick's Political Testament of 1752 contains the following sentences:

> "Of all the countries in Europe those of most immediate interest to Prussia are: Saxony, Polish Prussia, and Swedish Pomerania. Saxony would be the most useful."

Frederick began the war by attacking and occupying Saxony without a declaration of war, and capturing the Saxon army. Thenceforth the Saxons had to pay Prussian taxes, which were collected by Prussian officials, and the King of Prussia incorporated the captured Saxon army into his own army. (The Saxon soldiers nevertheless deserted when they could.)

The conquest of Saxony was not much use to Frederick anyway. Admittedly he was able to invade Bohemia the following spring, but an Austrian army equally strong and eager for action

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was already waiting for him there, and the battle near Prague—the biggest so far of the century—was only what Schlieffen used to call an "ordinary victory" for the Prussians. The Austrians retreated in good order, dug themselves in in Prague, and a relief army was on its way. Frederick had to split up his army to avert the relief of Prague, and to risk for the first time an offensive battle while he was outnumbered: at Kolin, with 33,000 Prussians against 54,000 Austrians. He lost, had to abandon the siege of Prague, and withdraw from Bohemia. His attempt to surprise the enemy with a preventive war had failed.

IN FACT THE WAR ITSELF seemed already lost, for now the adversaries came from all sides. The French advanced through Thuringia, the Austrians took back Silesia which was poorly defended, and the Russians occupied East Prussia, which was not defended at all. But now the Prussians showed what they could do. Up and down, and back and forth, in all directions they took on each opponent individually, still with the same small but superb army, and won three magnificent victories, on each occasion against a numerically superior enemy: in the late autumn of 1757 at Rossbach against the French, at Leuthen in Silesia against the Austrians, and in the summer of 1758 at Zorndorf in the Neumark against the Russians. These three battles made Frederick famous and popular throughout the world: a David who had coped with three Goliaths!

BUT HE DIDN'T REALLY cope with them in the long run. Frederick's splendid little army gradually bled to death, and the replacements that he remorselessly levied and enlisted no longer had the quality of the cuirassiers of Rossbach and Zorndorf and of the grenadiers of Leuthen. At Kunersdorf-on-the-Oder, where the Prussians risked a decisive battle in 1759 against the combined forces of the Austrians and the Russians, they suffered a crushing defeat. That saw the end of their successful all-round defence. From now on Prussia could only wage a delaying war of attrition.

It seems miraculous that Prussia was able to do this for three hopeless years. But it becomes less miraculous if one visualises the character of 18th-century wars. In those days wars were not people's wars. The citizen felt the effects all right: in higher taxes, devalued money, and wider conscription. But the countryside was not ravaged, the fields were cultivated and the harvests gathered in, business continued as usual, and the scholars let nothing upset the course of their controversies.

It was also remarkable how easily conquered and defeated countries and provinces adapted themselves to the respective shifts of power as a matter of course. The Saxons conscientiously paid their Prussian taxes; the Silesians readily paid homage to their Empress when they were occupied by the Austrians, and then just as readily paid homage to their King when the Prussians returned; the East Prussians paid homage to the Tsarina. The war passed over people's heads; they ducked and let the storm pass. Only for the soldiers was the endless war hard, terribly hard; but they stood under iron discipline. And the vast hopeless struggle was hard for the harassed King of Prussia, who needed a new inspiration every day in order somehow to survive.

DELIVERANCE ARRIVED at the beginning of 1762 with the death of the Russian Tsarina. Her successor, a rather confused man and an enthusiastic supporter of Frederick, not only made peace immediately but allied himself with his idol; and the Russian army swopped fronts. This Tsar, Peter III, was assassinated the same year, and his by no means grief-stricken widow and successor Catherine (later called the Great) revoked the Prussian alliance. But she remained at peace, and the other allies now also inclined more and more to peace. Their coffers were empty, their armies exhausted, the Franco-English war was decided, and dogged Prussia was obviously not going to be killed off.

This resulted in the peace of Hubertusburg—a peace brought about by exhaustion, which left everything just as it was. Saxony was restored

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again, Silesia remained with Prussia; so did East Prussia of course. It seemed that nobody had gained anything, and they had all been fighting for nothing.

But in reality this drawn game was a triumph for Prussia: it had held its own against three major powers.

HAD IT THEREBY become a major power itself? That was still a matter of doubt for a long time to come. Frederick himself in any case always remained conscious of the fact that, despite all martial glory, he had only just got away with it by an improbable stroke of luck. He had already stated after the Second Silesian War that he would not tackle so much as a cat for the rest of his life. After the Seven Years War he put that into practice. He returned to the principles of his father, to make Prussia internally strong without dissipating this strength by using it to excess. His foreign policy after 1763 became—like that of his father—cautious, modest and defensive once again. Its sole anxiety was to prevent Austria from ever becoming too powerful in the empire again (by the acquisition of Bavaria for instance); otherwise seeking contact, now chiefly with Russia.

"It is worth cultivating the friendship of those barbarians": this was Frederick's political maxim, which he observed to the end of his days and which Prussia too mostly observed later on, for almost a century, to its own advantage. But this was not true power politics.

The Prussia that Frederick left behind was a European curiosity: a small major (or semi-major) power, which looked like a Turkish sabre on the map: long and curved like a worm, almost nothing but borders; in addition, scattered possessions in the German west, which could not be defended in case of war. Prussia in the later years of Frederick was, strictly speaking, still without a solid basis of power, or even existence; just terribly prickly, with a stubborn instinct of self-preservation and with that dreadful army, the grenadiers of Leuthen and Torgau, which the whole of Europe had not been able to handle a quarter-of-a-century ago. As long as its great old man, *der alte Fritz*, was alive and as long as he, with his new-found caution, left others in peace, people also preferred in God's name to leave Prussia in peace.

BUT PRUSSIA'S SUCCESSES in the 18th century were not only due to the "genius" of Frederick the Great, not only due to favourable external circumstances and their skilful exploitation, and not only due to the success with arms and military efficiency. They were due above all to the fact that throughout the century Prussia was in such total accord with the spirit of the age, the *Zeitgeist*. This "rational state" was tailor-made for the Age of Reason. A state and nothing but a state, raceless, rootless, abstract, an administrative, judicial and military system construed from the spirit of the Enlightenment, "Prussia" could be displaced and transferred almost at will, and as it were slipped over the heads of any nations, races, and regions whatsoever. A popular rhyme of the period runs:

> *Niemand wird Preusse denn aus Not.*
> *Ist er's geworden, dankt er Gott.*
> (No man turns Prussian but for the rod.
> Once he is one, he thanks God.)

This Prussian rational state did not merely have a hard, metallic, mechanical face. It also had a cool liberality, justice and tolerance, which was none the less gratifying for its subjects because it was primarily founded on indifference. No witches were burnt in Prussia any more (as was still quite common elsewhere); there were no forced conversions and religious persecutions; everyone could think and write what he wished; the same law applied to everybody.

The millions of Poles, for example, who were incorporated by Prussia between 1772 and 1795, were no worse off in Prussia than they were before; if anything they were better off. There was no thought of "Germanising" them, which became the sad practice much later on, in the time of Bismarck and even more so in the post-Bismarck period, in the German Reich. And if anyone were to suggest to an 18th-century Prussian that he should deal with the Poles in the way Hitler did in the 20th century (or the way Poland subsequently dealt with those Germans placed under its jurisdiction) he would have been stared at as if he were mad.

The Poles who had become Prussians were neither treated as "sub-human" nor disposed of as alien elements; no interference whatsoever was made in their language, customs, and religion. On the contrary, they were (for instance) given more primary schools than ever before, with teachers who had to speak Polish as a matter of course. Polish serfdom was superseded by the milder Prussian hereditary subordination; and as far as the Polish upper classes were concerned, posts in the Prussian administration and posts as officers were open to them, and many Polish aristocrats became for generations not merely loyal but

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prominent Prussians. One of them sadly declared later, after 1871, that the Poles could have become Prussians any time, but never Germans.

ONE WAS NOT a Prussian by nature, as one was a Pole, a Frenchman, an Englishman, a German, or even a Bavarian or Saxon. Prussian nationality was more interchangeable than any other. This abstract statehood, rooted in no particular nation or race, but applicable at will so to speak, was Prussia's strength.

This 18th-century state demanded no enthusiasm from its subjects; it did not appeal to love of the Fatherland, national fervour, or even to tradition, but exclusively to their sense of duty. The highest Prussian order, the Black Eagle, bore the words: *Suum cuique*—To each his own. An apt state motto, even more apt if it were translated: "To each his duty."

The state set a task to every citizen, from the King to the poorest subject; it strongly obliged him to perform that task; and every class had a different task. One had to serve the state with money, another with blood, some also with "brains" *(Köpfchen)*, but all with hard work. Performance of one's task was in Prussia the first and highest commandment and at the same time it entirely justified everything else: anyone who did his duty was not committing a sin, whatever he might be doing. A second commandment was certainly not to be sorry for oneself; and a third, much weaker one, was to be—perhaps not exactly good (that would be overdoing it), but decent to one's fellow citizens. One's duty to the state came first. It was possible to live with this substitute for religion, and even to live an orderly and decent life—as long as the state that one served remained orderly and decent. The limits and dangers of the Prussian religion of duty only became apparent under Hitler.

BUT—what was it all for? Prussia urged its subjects to perform their duty, but what duty did it actually perform itself? Everyone had to serve the "Prussian idea": what idea did Prussia serve? We cannot detect one: no religious idea, no national idea, no idea of the sort which is nowadays called ideological. This state only served itself, served its own preservation which, as things stood geographically, inevitably also meant its expansion.

Prussia was an end in itself; and to its neighbours it was from the beginning a danger and a threat. It was possible to imagine Europe without it; and it is small wonder that many people wished it out of the way when it made itself so alarmingly strong and then made use of this strength under Frederick the Great—rapacious use, as one must observe in all objectivity. In the wars of Frederick the Great, right, *das Recht*, is almost always on the side of his enemies. And yet Frederick is the hero of these wars, and his injustice pales beside his heroic exploits. History is unjust like that sometimes.

Prussia did not have to exist. The world was able to do without it. It wanted to exist. Nobody had invited this small country into the circle of the major European powers. It obtruded itself, and it forced its way in. But the way it did so for half a century—with spirit, cunning, impudence, spite and heroism—is a spectacle worth contemplating.

Apologia

We are learning what to do with silence,
How it leans on our houses
This side, constantly, and that.
Frail and whittled we must seem
For they built them like battleships once
—Massive, to last.
Well, we move with the times at least,
Vulnerable and quickly gone.
You know: late-ish, a ring at the door,
Someone answering it, framed by light,
A thud, and you don't hear any more.

Blake Morrison

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Andrew Waterman

On the Mend

"And what if the patient, whose sores you are washing, does not at once show how grateful he is to you, but on the contrary, begins to torment you with his whims, without noticing or valuing your kindly services? What if he should start shouting at you, demanding something from you rudely (as often happens when people are in great pain)—what then? Will you still go on loving him?"

THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV

So now you are on the mend. Upon the lawn
outside the Female Ward we lounge, eat squares
of chocolate, and drink apple-juice; like stars
the weave of speedwells blue in springy grass.

It was not thus when we first visited.
The ambulance that had brought you from your last
bitching, sleepless, frantic, then mad week
outside, you called "the Celestial Insomnibus",

your mind raced manic, spinning wheels with no
purchase on the real; unsteadily
you craved to see life whole: "Bring me a globe
I'll reconcile Marx and Christianity"

(in tantrums at a world that would not see),
"I'd turn it upside-down and find my twin
in the Antipodes." So David said
"Take that lawn as the globe's top bit, start there."

The door between was locked then. "But I'll shrink
until I go through the keyhole", you explained.
Meanwhile, confined to nightwear, scribbled reams. . . .
The doctors said: "Her judgment's very poor."

We soft-shoe-shuffled down a corridor,
noting your institutional drugged pace.
And, on the wall, a fire-alarm beside
which the standard printed notice read

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"IN CASE OF FIRE", then every usual clause,
"1. Break the glass" etc. . . . Some loony had
crossed these through, in staggering capitals
substituted just, "I'D PUT IT OUT."

—Regardless of ferocity, extent?
Infantile omnipotence! the new
problem-solving technique for all! IN CASE
OF BEING SICK—GET WELL. IN CASE OF LOVE. . . .

"Wouldn't it be nice if we could fall in love,
marry, have children", confided your friend Anne
childishly. But, "David frightens me,
like Dr Who", at first. Your polar twin,

schizoid, depressive, Anne talked of her "fears",
when she talked. But mostly hunched in trance
gazed into no-space; roamed in odd forays
as we tippled the hospital-canteen Lucozade.

Then once, while fingersnapping patients lurched
failing to dance (others impassive stared)
to T.V.'s "Top of the Pops", Anne deadpan told
how, this time, it had happened she came here:

"I was going to hit my mother with a saw.
She was sawing. So I took the saw
to hit her. So my sister got me here.
My sister's right. They make me well in here."

Anne's fears, your hypomanic ferment of
ideas, aggressions, such are impulses
we all know. "Health" is pragmatic, it appears:
can the world cope with one, or one with it?

"It's chemical", they say. When you snapped back
at my mild "no" to your "All growing-up
is coming to terms with one's father", since my tone
"recalled" him, She needs help, I thought, self-curbed.

Well: you "got your clothes" (the idiom here
and emblem of recovering); and then
your room's french-window was unlocked, so we
and others visiting walked you on the lawn.

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And Anne, as if a switch had dropped, clicked back
to "normal", talkative, interested, live;
and has her clothes. So now for the last time
before your coming-out the four of us

sit on this grass, your sunlit room behind
decked with flowers, cards, its pastel shades
a cool interior; all here you know best
are on the mend. It's garden-partyish.

Except, of course, that others are brought in
each day. "That beautiful girl", you said, found drunk,
fouled and pregnant in a Derry Street;
the youth who'd blown up an ice-cream van, for

"the ultimate onanistic thrill", you joke.
And also in the Male Ward, there's our friend
the alcoholic artist. Visiting
you he scatters litter, yanks a door

to wrench a Lucozade-top off so gouts
splatter annoying the cleaners. Insufferable
the suffering can be: by turns he fawns,
insults, all nerve-ends frayed; once, turkey-faced,

accused we'd swayed his nerve-worn estranged wife,
then waddled huffing down the corridor.
Well, outside, in a Belfast pub they'd smash
his face for less. "But he needs help", we say.

So, the bell rings calling you for lunch,
quietly to accept your "medication" where
three weeks ago they'd hold you down, inject,
as you curled screaming distant in lost time.

"Outside" will care for you. But may not care
to be always pleasanter to you than you
to it which falls back on no such "needs help"
exoneration. Judgment that is poor

will be called bad, not "illness": morally
health entails responsibility where
infantilism never put fires out.
Meanwhile, for outside, you've fresh-waved your hair.

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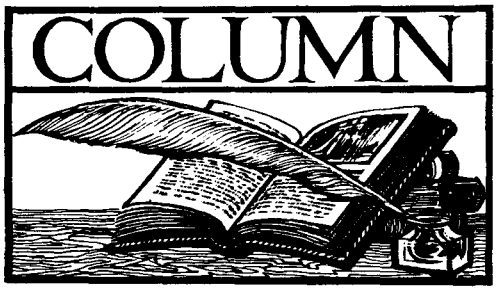

ANYONE WHO READ George Urban's remarkable interview with Manuel Azcárate, a leading member of the Spanish Communist Party, in the March issue of ENCOUNTER, or his previous interview with Lombardo Radice (May 1977), or indeed any of the very large body of literature which has by now been devoted to the subject of Euro-Communism, must surely at the end be tempted to ask himself in what sense Euro-Communism is entitled to call itself Communism at all; or even in what sense it can claim to be specifically European.

Such questions spontaneously spring to one's mind even if one accepts Euro-Communists' declarations of doctrine and policy at their face value and as meaning quite simply what they say. Many, however, who retain a certain doubt or scepticism about Euro-Communism's professions of faith will also ask, as a corollary, the further question whether Euro-Communism is not merely a stratagem devised to appeal to the gullibility of Western liberals, democrats and radicals; and may well conclude that beneath the polished and sophisticated veneer of Euro-Communism there still remains the old familiar pattern of Marxism-Leninism as practised in the Soviet Union and its satellites.

Such doubting Thomases, if, with good reason, they push their scepticism to the point of cynicism, might well summarise their attitude by saying: Scratch a Euro-Communist and you'll find a Brezhnev, or even worse a Stalin, and in Euro-Communism would find an insidious danger which contributes one more threat to the already precarious stability of Western society, particularly as it exists in Western Europe today. In short, for Western society, Euro-Communism constitutes a kind of Trojan horse.

I myself do not share such fears and suspicions; and indeed I find it difficult, if not impossible, to doubt the good faith and sincerity of such men as Señor Azcárate, or Santiago Carrillo, secretary of the Spanish Communist Party. What does arouse my scepticism, in their case and that of other Euro-Communists, is the kind of Utopianism which seems to underlie their hopes of a Communist régime, which, whether in Spain, in Italy, in France, or indeed in any other part of Western Europe, will be all things to all men, even those who until now have been regarded as unequivocally class enemies.

I find these doubts of mine intensified by acquaintance with those intellectual *avant-garde* members of the upper-bourgeoisie in Europe who seem to share precisely the same illusions as Euro-Communists. In beautiful villas in Tuscany, in luxurious apartments in Paris, I have heard highly cultivated and intellectual members of the bourgeoisie assure me that in Euro-Communism there are forces and tendencies at work which will reconcile all the differences which have hitherto divided class from class and man from man; and also, incidentally, preserve themselves in the privileges they at present enjoy, as being an essential contribution to that rich diversity of life and culture which will prevail when once, as a result not of violence but of sweet reason and patience, the ugly shackles of capitalism have been thrown off.

This is not intended as a parody or mockery of such conversations, nor should they be taken lightly or frivolously. The participants are very often serious, intelligent, and sensitive people, highly successful in their professions and businesses, which somehow are frequently connected, if only indirectly, with the media, who have devoted long and serious thought to the course which they are advocating. Very often one cannot help being reminded of those most intelligent representatives of the *Ancien Régime* in France, who anticipated with rapture, and embraced with enthusiasm, the Revolution which for so many of them ended in the tumbril and on the guillotine.

DAZZLED AS I USUALLY AM by the brilliance and subtlety of the distinctions they draw between what we can anticipate now, under a Euro-Communist form of revolution, and anything we have known before, I often feel it brutal and brutish to enquire whether this is really Communism they are talking about, and, if so, what relation it has, if any, to other versions of Communism, as enunciated by Marx and Engels, or by Lenin or by Stalin, and even more to the practical application of those doctrines such as we have had so many and such unfortunate opportunities of witnessing in the last 60 years, because certainly they seem to bear not the slightest family resemblance. I feel even more stupid, ignorant, *démodé*, if I continue to intervene by asking what part, if any, is played in the general theory and practice of Euro-Communism by such brutal facts, or hypotheses, as the class war, the liquidation of the class enemy, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the necessity of terror, the inevitability of violence in accomplishing the victory of the Revolution.

On the whole I find that such questions are treated with a certain kindly benevolence as if they came from some not-too-bright elementary student

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at a theological seminary who has not yet arrived at the stage where he can be expected to understand the subtleties and profundities of which the faith is capable when correctly interpreted. But implicit in such answers is the underlying assumption that Euro-Communism possesses a kind of innate superiority over other forms because it is, after all, a force which for the first time complies with Marx's fundamental assumption that the revolution can only be achieved in the most advanced capitalist countries, and even then only when the capitalist economy has exhausted all possibilities of further growth and expansion, and that Europe is now rapidly approaching such a point.

In this sense Euro-Communism can and does disclaim any responsibility for, or indeed any loyalty to, the monstrous consequences which ensued when Marxism, in its Leninist or Stalinist form, was applied in an essentially backward agricultural country like Russia. Leninism-Stalinism was a disastrous aberration due to failure to observe one of the fundamental conditions laid down by Marx for the victory of the revolution and its consequence, the classless society.

EURO-COMMUNISM, on the other hand, accepts this condition, or at least claims to, so that it can logically appeal at one and the same time both to those who wish capitalism to develop until it can develop no further, and to the working class which will finally inherit all that capitalism has achieved. But in the meanwhile what is the function of working-class parties of the Euro-Communist type? At this point Euro-Communism finds itself faced by the grinning and mocking ghosts of controversies which plagued, tormented, and split the international working-class movement after the death of Marx and Engels until they were as it seemed finally and brutally resolved by the triumph of Lenin's *coup d'état* of October 1917, which, almost overnight, established the triumph of the Revolution in Russia. Yet the ghosts have lingered on, and Euro-Communism has suddenly brought them to life again.

In the course of this protracted, and in the end tragic argument, the protagonists on both sides could appeal to the texts of Holy Writ, as exemplified in the writing of Marx and Engels, sometimes in ways which made Marx say, in response to some of his followers: *Je ne suis pas un Marxiste*. For despite the apparently rigid formula which Marx appeared to have laid down for History's inexorable march towards the total and final victory of the working class, which in emancipating itself emancipated all other classes as well, he was himself surprisingly flexible both about the time-table of the march, and the route and the methods by which the final goal would be reached. He once said that it might well be a hundred years before the working class achieved its final objective; and if he were alive he might well repeat the same statement today.

IT IS TO THIS ASPECT of Marxism which Euro-Communism appeals in the blandishments which it now holds out not only to the working class but to all those members of other classes in Western society who fundamentally sympathise with its aspirations; and today these form a large and significant section of the population. And in making such an appeal, Euro-Communists have behind them not merely the vaguely humanitarian, radical, and reformist sympathies which have already made a certain degree and kind of Socialism characteristic of almost all advanced capitalist societies today. They also have behind them the authority of some of the most distinguished interpreters of Marxism in the past; even though most of them have been reduced to oblivion, silence, or even worse, after the triumph in Russia of the official and dogmatic version of Marxism represented by Lenin, and later, in an even cruder form, by Stalin.

It is not indeed in its theoretical aspect that Euro-Communism is weak. What weakens its appeal, perhaps fatally, are the inexorable facts and practical experiences which have been absorbed by millions of people who by now have had the misfortune to live under Communism, whatever the theoretical guise in which it may choose to appear. It is not enough for Euro-Communism to disclaim responsibility for such facts and experiences and declare that they are due to a "theoretical" misunderstanding of Marxism, more especially in the monstrous perversion of it perfected and perpetuated in the Soviet Union. For by now Europe itself has had its own sufficient experience of what it is like to live under Communist rule. In the East, which remains indissolubly a part of Europe, it continues to do so; and even in the West there are a sufficient number of people who, at sundry times and at various places after the War, were forced to acquire the same bitter knowledge. Against such facts and experiences theory is likely to be of little avail, even when tricked out and embellished with protestations of belief in democracy, freedom, and fraternity. It is not enough for Euro-Communism to dissociate itself from the Soviet Union and its satellites and all their works. What is required is some practical demonstration—as, for instance, in the administration of the Euro-Communist parties themselves—that in its hands Communism would not lead to the same results as it has everywhere else where it has been applied in practice. But I myself would not care to risk being the subject of such an experiment.

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YET, HAVING I hope sufficiently expressed my doubts and suspicions of Euro-Communism, I am still forced to confess that I find it a fascinating subject—partly, no doubt, because it expresses, sometimes with great force and eloquence, certain ideas and feelings which once influenced me greatly in my youth and are still not without their effect on me—partly because it represents an important political force whose precise strength is at the moment difficult to estimate but potentially and implicitly may constitute a genuine danger to the stability and security of Western Europe—but also because it represents, as it were, an end-product of an immensely complicated intellectual and political movement which has helped to reshape not merely Europe but the rest of the world.

To anyone who wishes to follow, and understand, the intellectual and philosophical aspects of this movement, one could not do better than to recommend the three massive volumes of Professor Leszek Kolakowski's *Main Currents of Marxism*.[1] To read them is in a sense an arduous task, because of their length, the depth and subtlety of the knowledge they display, and the complexities of the arguments and controversies which Professor Kolakowski so admirably brings to life for us again. But the demands which his book make upon the reader are far more than compensated for by the fascination with which one follows Professor Kolakowski through all the intricacies of his subject, as if one were penetrating some dense and overgrown forest, in the steps of an immensely wise and expert guide who interprets for one the significance of every trembling of a leaf, every blade of grass, every trail, footprint and spoor, until at last one feels that what had begun merely as a confusion of impressions has been beautifully and meticulously reduced to order. I myself read these three volumes with the kind of delight which one only experiences when one encounters a writer and scholar who is quite superlatively the master of his subject.

Professor Kolakowski has of course quite special qualifications for the immense task he has undertaken and so magnificently discharged. Sometime professor of philosophy at the University of Warsaw, he is admirably equipped to assess and discuss the purely intellectual and theoretical aspects of the problems which for a century have obsessed, disturbed, plagued, harassed and split the international working-class movement. At the same time he has had the opportunity to observe at close quarters how such purely intellectual dissensions have had the most practical, and in some cases tragic, effect upon those who, whether with or against their will, have become involved in the historical development of the Communist movement. For such a person, it was almost inevitable that he should have been expelled from his post and his country. As a quondam Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, I am delighted to think that there he may have found a refuge and a haven in which he can pursue his work in freedom and, I would hope, happiness.

IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE, in a short space, to give any kind of a summary of the scope and depth of Professor Kolakowski's three volumes, which should, and no doubt will, become required reading for anyone who professes to discuss the ideology of Marxism with any degree of seriousness or understanding. Here I should only like to say that Professor Kolakowski's modest title might just as well have been replaced by the perhaps more appropriate one of *The Rise and Fall of Marxist Ideology*. Professor Kolakowski, however, is far too scholarly and self-restrained to strike so challenging a note. But the titles of his individual volumes in themselves give a kind of clue to the underlying theme of the whole work. The first, *The Founders*, is devoted to Marx and Engels and the immensely varied assortment of sources from which they derived their own revolutionary ideology. The second, entitled *The Golden Age*, is concerned with the period during which the ideas of the founders were still open to free and unrestricted discussion, both within and outside the working-class movement, and hence made an immense contribution to the influence which Marxism has exerted in almost every field of thought and study during the last century. It was brought to an abrupt end by the rigid dictatorship established by Lenin and reinforced by Stalin, not only politically but intellectually, over the Communist movement.

Thus Professor Kolakowski's third volume is appropriately named *The Breakdown*, which adequately describes the efforts of servile epigones and sycophants to breathe some kind of life into an ideology which, as an intellectual system, had been deprived of any real content except such as served directly practical and political ends.

I do not know which of these three volumes I read with the greater fascination, because each has its own particular and self-sufficient theme. But taken together they read like the three acts of some huge, world-shaking, intellectual tragedy; or, alternatively, like some immense intellectual detective story or thriller, which is at once the exposition, exposure, and solution of a great crime and its aftermath. The three volumes together have given me so much intellectual pleasure and excitement that I can only offer Professor Kolakowski my deepest thanks and gratitude.

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[1] *Main Currents of Marxism*. By LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI. Translated by P. S. FALLA. Clarendon Press, Oxford: Vol. I, £7.95; Vol. II, £8.50; Vol. III, £8.50.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Theatre Letter from Moscow

By Nicholas Rzhevsky

IN SPITE OF ITS perennial difficulties with censors and cultural bureaucrats, the Moscow theatre is showing an unusual vitality as it settles into the 1979 season. Invigorated by visits to San Francisco and Broadway, Galina Volchek, principal director of the Contemporary, is expanding an already full repertoire ranging from John Osborne to Czech allegories. Anatoly Efros of the *Malaia Bronnaia* and Yuri Liubimov of the *Taganka* are staging new productions with dash and spirit; while artists, scenarists and theatre administrators are taking risks unheard-of even in the liberal Khrushchev period. The old dowager, the Moscow Art Theatre, has finally managed to loosen her stays with the help of a handsome new building, the seductive talents of Oleg Efremov, and (in some productions) a stage that has shed both its curtain and the traditional seagull emblem.

A more courageous use of the theatrical genre's social-political potentialities partially explains differences from prior years. Russian actors and audiences alike, very much aware of the varieties of interpretation that can be given to ostensibly innocuous words and scenes, look for the shrugs, grimaces, and larger ironies undermining orthodoxy in ways that are impossible for printed prose and closely censored mass media. To the casual tourist much of the theatre's unique function is only apparent on the surface, in the crowds that surround the *Taganka*, in the rhythmic clapping that gives an evening some of the magic of drama's ritual roots, and in the sold-out performances of every night in the year. Behind the scenes, however, the popularity of forbidden fruit is exploited in complex ways. The precious few seats of the avant-garde companies are not only sold and resold, but are traded by the theatres for unpurchasable electronic equipment, for repair services, and for protection from the very state bureaucracy which forbids unorthodox fare.

At one point last season the *Taganka* was entirely given over to the Supreme Soviet then in session in Moscow. In a typical irony, the bureaucrats undoubtedly understood their tickets to *The Master and Margarita* to be an expression of prestige, along with chauffeured cars and luxury goods unavailable to the citizenry. And what they saw on stage was Mikhail Bulgakov's magnificent Devil encouraging Muscovites to perform various vulgarities and immoralities in the name of luxury, material goods, and power. The director's fashionable techniques of audience involvement—direct address and contact undertaken by the actor, performance from the orchestra or balcony, the sparse props and scenery used to break down barriers between stage and spectator—acquired a particular Russian meaning and energy that week which Bulgakov, a political victim and old theatrical hand, would have surely appreciated.

Two Moscow oddities deserve special notice: it is the experimental repertory companies rather than the grand, heavily subsidised, and centrally-located *Mossoviet, Maly* (literally "small", but so named only in comparison to the *Bolshoi* next door), or the huge Soviet Army Theatre, which never lack an audience; and, paradoxically, it is the avant-garde companies whose repertoire is most intimately involved in the classics of Russian drama and literature. John Osborne, Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and even Peter Ustinov are well represented, but the native heritage is more interesting to the Russians not only for its inherent strength but also because the classical-historical frame allows an independent art to be smuggled in through the 19th century. The censors are hard put to reject past dramatic and literary achievements that have been built up into objects of national pride by the government, while this same native tradition—based as it is on religious and moral issues—inspires the cruellest attacks from within on Soviet social and ideological conditions.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEN, that the highlights of the past season were interpretations of works known intimately to most Russians. In addition to Bulgakov, they included Efros's new productions of Gogol's *Marriage* and Turgenev's *Month in the Country*, Volchek's *Cherry Orchard*, Efremov's *Ivanov*, and Liubimov's dramatisation of Gogol's prose in *A Tale of Inspection*. All five plays were provided with contemporary resonances and contemporary stagecraft, but their vitality, one could feel, ultimately originated in a shared sense of aesthetic confrontation with long-standing issues of the society.

As Solzhenitsyn would hasten to remind us, in the Russian instance, both technical experimen-

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tation in the arts and the vigorous exploration of social-political nuances are usually based on native moral concerns. Fortunately, however, the theatres of Liubimov, Efros, and Volchek—unlike the larger government-favoured companies—manage to serve up moral reminders while entertaining and asserting the prerogatives of an independent aesthetic perspective. To preserve the complexity of the writer's creative world the *Taganka* puts on stage not one but two Gogols, several Mayakovskys, and five Pushkins in dramatisations of their works. Molière participates in *Tartuffe*—instructs the audience and actors and reveals the tensions and balances that must be managed by a Court- (or state-) subsidised art. A huge clock hand swings back and forth between Christ and Pilate in *The Master and Margarita*; but the device is bared by a minor demon, who pulls back the curtain to show a crouching technician. Efros has his actors rearrange the stage in full view of the public, while Liubimov during the first couple of weeks or even months of a new production stands in the orchestra signalling directions to his actors with a flashlight. The spectator in short is not coddled or played down to; it is assumed that he will not confuse life and drama but will join in formulating the unique point of view that theatre can provide.

Moral involvement expressed in close conjunction with an autonomous development of theatrical craft, rather than through the more typical Soviet attempt to evolve art out of social purpose, is a *leitmotif* which frequently emerges on stage and in private conversations. Liubimov's *Hamlet*—misinterpreted by Western journalists such as Hedrick Smith who are too accustomed to broad political hints—emphasises the moral-aesthetic freedom of theatre in an unexpected, programmatic opening. Hamlet is played by the most popular of Russian singers—Vladimir Vysotsky—a member of the *Taganka* troupe. Tapes of Vysotsky's self-composed songs, mocking and prodding the society, can be heard in the smallest of Russian villages and the most cosmopolitan apartments of the large cities. But rather than using his actor's reputation to interpret Shakespeare, Liubimov directly confronts and rejects the obvious social-political perspective. Vysotsky, alone on the stage with his guitar, begins the play by reciting Pasternak's verse from *Dr Zhivago*: "The hum dies down. I walk out on the boards. . . ." Then, in an unforgettable gesture, he puts down the musical instrument and firmly steps out of the impermanent world of social protest into the other role of eternal theatrical verities.

The development of a theatrical aesthetic involving the audience—a stagecraft that is both independent from and committed to the society at large—inspires a great deal of the innovative dramatic technique attempted in Moscow.

Efros opens his *Marriage* with a slow-motion procession of the cast from the rear of the stage into the orchestra—a three-dimensional effect that focuses and fixes characters into a trenchant quality which makes difficult uninvolved contemplation. In the *Taganka*'s production of *Ten Days That Shook the World* the performance begins at the door when one surrenders the ticket to revolutionary soldiers who impale them on bayonets; in the foyer spectators mingle with actors who sing songs and ditties of the period. In Abramov's *Wooden Horses* the audience enters the theatre through its stage; and when they leave after Gogol's grotesque caricatures and phantoms of *A Tale of Inspection*, they pass through a foyer full of fun-house mirrors. In the latter play they have just seen a painful depiction of Gogolian psychiatric wards given an obvious contemporary tonality. The important meaning—suggesting both the theatre's strength and precariousness—is formulated in an interaction of actors and audience when Liubimov himself comes on stage to accept applause and is accompanied by two white-coated attendants who firmly hold him by the arms. In *Have Faith, Comrade!*—a dramatisation of Pushkin's correspondence and verse—programmes are handed out in the form of letters. The envelopes are open, and not by accident, for a major motif is censorship of the arts and the intrusion of the government into the poet's life and work.

PARTICULARLY STRIKING in the current season is a subversive abandonment of the painstaking realism supported by state ideology in favour of pluralistic meanings and challenges to imagination. The psychological and symbolic procedures of Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Vahtangov are clearly again inspiring new dramatic modes and ideas. In the *Taganka* a gigantic nose magically evolves out of a bent, nude knee stuck out from behind the curtain. Entire plays are organised around some one piece of scenery. In Efros's *Month in the Country*, the actors revolve and are revolved around their relationships with the aid of an open, rotating gazebo. It picks up speed at peaks of emotional intensity and slows down or is stopped by the characters at moments of solitude or withdrawal. Pushkin's life is organised by two carriages; in one or the other he goes off to exile, drives to the court functions he abhorred, makes love, and returns mortally wounded from his duel.

Liubimov plays *What Is To Be Done* from behind long rows of classroom seats which entirely fill the stage; actors pop up from behind them, declaim from them, jump over them, sleep and cook on them. The point is, of course, that Nicholas Chernyshevsky's novel is the basic text of Soviet ideological education, a schoolhouse piece imitated by Lenin and intimately known—if not often explored as here—by every Russian member

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of the audience. In *A Tale of Inspection* a similar row of sewing machines does everything from stitching the famous overcoat of Gogol's Akakii Akakievich, to duplicating the rat-tat-tat authoritarianism of Russia's ever-present bureaucracy.

Liubimov and Efros are insistent on developing a new, more complex theatre which incorporates music, dance, and multi-media devices. In rehearsals Liubimov, when upset, is fond of reminding his actors that they have not studied enough; when asked what they should study he speaks of the tremendous impact of radio, film, television, video-recording. "Drama is the most dilettante of the arts", he points out. "It may seem that anyone can act. But a pianist understands that he must practice; a violinist understands; but the actor is himself an instrument, and the instrument is often left neglected. Voice is not practised sufficiently—plasticity, diction, music. . . ." In the *Taganka* the actors may not only be appearing in three major roles while memorising a fourth, but may also be singing and dancing in the foyer or on stage, and roller-skating when the occasion demands it. The commitment is immense, the hours impossible; but Arthur Miller, for one, was surely inspired by the totality of obligation undertaken when he wrote on the wall of Liubimov's office, "The Theatre is saved again!"

Several choices of repertoire for future seasons indicate the firm intention of directors to continue to test government tolerance while formulating new stagecraft and dealing with troublesome native questions. No small importance must be attached to plans for dramatising Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, *Devils*, and *Brothers Karamazov*. Fedor Mihailovich, as the Russians affectionately refer to him, still provides one of the strongest voices of protest directed against the prevailing directions of Russian society. Invigorated by the organic self-exploration he suggests, we can surely expect a continual evolution of theatrical technique and concern for the most sensitive Russian issues of materialism and morals.

Letter from Germany

Who or What (if Anything) Speaks for the "New Europe"?

By Joachim Neander

MOST OF the bookings have already been firmly made. On the electoral eve of 10 June—for places in the European Parliament—the Continental leaders (from Helmut Schmidt and Willy Brandt to Giscard d'Estaing) will be "talking heads" on BBC, ITV, and even on some of the American networks. But a few will not be heard at all, and possibly not even seen: among them the CDU leader Helmut Kohl, the French socialist chief François Mitterand, et al. The difference is elementary: some speak English, the others do not. The new Western Europe may well be a new giant, economically speaking, well on the way to new political unities—but from a cultural viewpoint, namely the matter of language and communicable speech, it is still pretty close to zero point.

Has there been anybody over the last thirty years of European idealism who has devoted himself to the problem? If he has, he hasn't been either heard, understood, or translated. I talked recently to one of our leading German radio producers and he was simply bewildered by the problem of how to continue his series of public interest broadcasts "direct from Parliament" when the microphones will register only the noises of a Tower of Babel. The voice of the new Europe will be the technical drone of a skilled impersonal glassed-in simultaneous-Interpreter.

Let us have no illusions about the matter. Anyone who has ever attended an international meeting, with his head strapped in by ear-phones hour-after-hour and day-after-day, knows that no prescribed sleeping pill could ever compete; and no reflection on the resourceful band of translators is intended. The attention span of television-viewers and listeners at home is no greater. Our citizens may be "European voters", but hardly anybody is prepared to sit through even a few minutes of a political speech or a parliamentary debate in a foreign language even with benefit of clear, crisp, compact sub-titles on the milky TV-screen.

THERE USED TO BE praise for the post-War Germans, and especially their preparedness to pick up a quick English vocabulary and to venture out into India or South Africa or Texas to sell a *Volkswagen* or a case of *Löwenbräu* beer. Official figures from the educators would seem to suggest satisfying progress. According to the

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Kultusministerkonferenz every pupil since 1964 has been getting English instruction from the fifth school-year onwards. But shouldn't this mean, then, that every citizen of the *Bundesrepublik* under 30 must know and understand and speak a little bit of the language? The effort is there, but what of the results?

The experts tell us that the mastery of a foreign language depends only 20% on intelligence, about 33% each on diligence and motivation, and a special aptitude; that the best time to start is early (i.e. in childhood), that the most efficient methods by-pass the old bores of grammar and vocabulary and literal translation. The language associations insist on the prohibition of the mother tongue in teaching (and this, sadly enough, has unsettled parents who themselves would have liked to help out a bit at home). I have even seen new scientific papers which have worked out a programme of such semantical concentration that the whole programme of school instruction in English ends at the age of 15. Evidently certain Teutonic formations in our brain structure get in the way at that point for perfect learning, which even the most advanced of language laboratories cannot quite effectively iron out. But what far more clearly in most recent years have proved hindrances are the new tendencies to use language instruction for other purposes, i.e. learning about "society" and "politics." Our Marxists—in both East and West—are tireless about this. The East German professional journal on language-teaching, *Fremdsprachenunterricht*, has in its September 1978 number an article on "the cultivation of military preparedness in the teaching of Russian."

BUT MOST OF all this, in East and West, is theory; practice is something else again. The most reformed and progressive of our schools have so much choice and elective freedom in general required subjects that (as I learned from educators in Giessen) only something in the vicinity of 2% of all *Abiturienten*—equivalent to A-level sixth-formers or advanced high-school graduates—complete their *Abitur* with two foreign languages, after attending a *Gymnasium*. Since these humanistic schools are being done away with, it is no surprise that the figures of about ten years ago or so read: 50%. And even the figures in the lower-school classes indicate regress, not progress. The aversion to foreign languages has apparently grown, and the failure rate is higher.

Be that as it may, what then happens to all that linguistic capacity which enlightened reforms and laboratories and semantic theory have been inducing in our millions? There have been high hopes for the cultivation of a minimal understanding—to be able to conduct a conversation in a foreign country, in any of our neighbouring lands, with some fluency and not too bad an accent. And how many are there with such abilities? Apart from those who feel they *must* (ambitious businessmen, passionate tourists), there would seem to be few, a small minority in any case, who acquire the "gift of tongues."

I looked for statistics on these language abilities in the *Bundesrepublik*—in this year of the birth of a new Europe—and have so far found none. In the *Statistisches Bundesamt* there are indeed all kinds of reports on how fast and how well (or poorly) all our millions of *Gastarbeiter* from Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia and Turkey manage to learn German. But how well and efficiently (or poorly) we Germans have managed to learn anybody else's language nobody has got around yet to asking. And this of course is my main point: my rather dismal impression that the great peoples of our new Europe are turned inward in their respective language areas, that national vanity and provincialism rule the day, that the cosmopolitanism of the European dream is still a Goethean gleam in a utopian's eye.

Most Europeans, and surely Germans, feel that it is something of a luxury to learn a foreign language perfectly. To be sure, in the small countries there are innumerable persons—from professors to sales-girls—who contrive to speak several languages fluently in markedly good accents; and they are, to be sure, the ones who populate most of the international conferences in one multilingual capacity or another. But in the big Cultures, as they like to think of their monolingual National Heritages, there are few imitators. What somebody has called "Waldheim English" is considered to be quite good enough; it may sound as if it is breaking down, like the United Nations itself, but it does have a fluency and sometimes even a diplomatic usefulness. What is most grotesque about it is that it becomes more and more a new kind of acceptable Standard English, and its odd inflections, curious phrasings and twisted tones—not unlike some English-language appeal from the heart of Black Africa—become almost more understandable, easier for us to grasp and comprehend, than the broadcast from Britain or from America, once taken to be the genuine article.

IF THE GENERAL impression appears to be one of chaos, then it is not altogether accidental; the "chaos", or the multiplicity, is planned and official. According to the European Cultural Convention of the Strasbourg Council, there is to be no *lingua franca*, no "leading languages" of any kind, and all the national tongues—some 21 are officially registered—are equal in rights and status. As a result there can never be an agreement about holding some specific Parliamentary debate in any one

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language (French, or English, or German).

If there is any hope of ever moving out of the Tower-of-Babel depression, it would seem—or so say most of the Europeans I have been interviewing—to lie in that magic window of contemporary life, Television. The average citizen of Europe, not too happy or comfortable when he crosses a border even in a holiday spirit and none too eager to go through the pains of evening language-courses, has at least here, in his own living-room, the chance to come to grips with some foreign words, phrases, meanings, tones. But if this is a real prospect for progress, the television systems of Europe have yet to hear about it.

I watched some time ago one of our leading German news-feature programmes, and the occasion was a tirade from the mouth of Field-Marshal Idi Amin at the African Unity meeting in Nairobi, One saw the large glistening head of the speaker; one noted his twinkling eyes and his broad smile; one followed the camera into the audience as they roared with laughter and held their sides. I, and the others with me, tried to catch the low-volumed original sound—what did Idi Amin's own voice sound like?—was he speaking English, or Ugandan, or Swahili, or what? All was in vain. The so-called "*Voice Over*"—that monotonous baritone, which fills in on a hundred different programmes—was efficiently there, accurate I suppose, but dry and barren and almost completely worthless.

I inquired at the TV headquarters, and it seems

Tongue-Tied Americans in a Polyglot World

New York City

THE UNITED STATES *is alone among industrial nations in its neglect of foreign-language study, and the situation is far worse than officially quoted statistics indicate. Unless there is a rapid reversal of the trend, the USA will be severely hampered in fulfilling its international obligations—diplomatic as well as economic. In addition, many young people are shutting themselves out of promising careers in international commerce, a rapidly growing field.*

For example, Russian is being studied above the second-year level by only 3,500 US high-school students, and at last count, only 197 students were enrolled in third-year Chinese and fewer than 200 in fourth-year Japanese.

WHAT IS WRONG *with modern-language scholarship? The field is concerned with practically everything except language—literature, sociology, psychology and a smattering of economics. Examples from the program catalog: "The Development of Literary Consciousness in 16th-Century French Literature", "Cognitive Psychology and the Teaching of Literature" and, under the Foreign Language listing, a panel on "Historical Germanic Syntax: Methods and Results."*

Good scholarly topics all, but not the kind of academic model that encourages college-bound high school students to choose a foreign language. University faculty members engrossed in such scholarship are not likely to take much interest in teaching foreign languages to undergraduates or preparing foreign-language teachers.

"THE DEVASTATION **of foreign languages is a melancholy sight", said Bartlett Giamatti, Yale's new president.**

Today, 15% of all high school students study a modern language, a slightly smaller proportion than did so in 1890. The difference is that 89 years ago more than half of all high school students studied Latin, compared with only 1% today.

The high point of modern-language study was reached just before World War II, when 36% of all secondary school students were enrolled. By the mid-1950s, the figure had declined to 20%. Despite all the publicity and subsequent spending, the educational competition sparked by the first Soviet Sputnik in 1957 raised the total by a mere 4%, only to have it plummet to its present all-time low, when schools and colleges surrendered in the 1960s to an adolescent revolt against all requirements.

And even these dismal statistics paint too rosy a picture. Attrition is enormous. Of all those 15% of the nation's high school students who study a foreign language, fewer than 2% ever reach the third year. And in spite of the talk about Polish-American ethnic pride, a nationwide search turned up only 81 high school students who are taking Polish beyond the second year.

The problem is compounded by poor teaching. Too few teachers have themselves ever been "immersed" in the language they teach. Much instruction still follows the old pattern of "the pen of my aunt."

Fred M. Hechringei
INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

New York

A GOVERNMENT SURVEY *shows that 27% of US high-school seniors believe that Golda Meir was president of Egypt, 40% think that Israel is an Arab nation and 17% estimate that the US population is larger than that of China or the Soviet Union.*

A Gallup poll showed in 1977 that half the US population did not know that the United States had to import petroleum to meet its needs.

Only 5% of the nation's public-school teachers have had any exposure to international studies, and the American Council on Education said that only 3% of undergraduates are enrolled in courses dealing with international affairs or foreign cultures. Only about half of those seeking doctoral degrees must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language.

A recent study in nine countries by the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization ranked US students near the bottom in their comprehension of foreign cultures. The study involved 30,000 persons from 10 to 14 years old.

NEW YORK TIMES

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that in this case our own German narrowness was not to blame. The film agencies which deliver the material to any and all international takers no longer worry about the original sound tapes; whatever comes out is adequate; nobody really cares. The TV editor in this case had almost no usable sound at all; he had to obtain the "words" to the "pictures" from a news-agency which transmitted a summary of the official speech being made. It was then pieced together. According to Karl-Heinz Rudolph who is in charge of News at one (ZDF) of the two German major TV stations, the whole procedure is beginning to touch the borders of his greatest fear: documentary dishonesty. Even in the event that there is original sound on the film and thus available for transmission and/or translation, is there somebody available on the staff with enough linguistic ability to make *some quick adequate renderings*? *Perhaps somewhere* in the celebrated cellars of the BBC, but no linguists that I know of this side of the Channel. The news editors on the desk have to do it, and masters of some seven or eight languages they are not. Their basic requirement is only a minimal English. In the common programmes of both major TV stations in Germany (ARD and ZDF) for the training of future television editors the whole matter of foreign languages has no place. I spoke to the man in charge, Franz Wordemann, an able and experienced writer and broadcaster with much international experience; and he feels that the so-called *Fremdsprachenangst*, the fear of "foreign languages" (or perhaps, better put, "alien sounds"), is not something which is likely to be overcome, even in the busiest and happiest of New Europes.

A YEAR OR TWO ago a survey was made by the *Westdeutsche Rundfunk* of its Third Programme élite audiences: How did they feel about the late-night film showings, some of which were in original sound (with sub-titles) and others were completely dubbed? Some 70% felt that original-versions-with-subtitles were being shown "too often." In the meantime, films that are not completely synchronised into German have now become the exception even on the "highbrow" Third Programme. Our German audiences can now take comfort and pleasure that everybody—every star in Hollywood and every studio starlet, all the Oliviers and John Waynes and Jean-Paul Belmondos, De Sica's happy Latins and Ingmar Bergman's unhappy Swedes—speaks German, carefully pronounced, ingeniously enunciated (for every dubbed syllable *fits* the mouth and lip movements), and even with a touch of "stardom" that is detectable. Every famous screen personality has come to have his or her own German Voice. As one German film distributor told me, "When an important Synchronisation Voice dies (they are often leading

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actors and actresses in Germany), it's a serious crisis in the movie industry. . . ."

To avoid misunderstandings, I am not arguing that unsynchronised films are necessarily better for the improvement of the linguistic malaise I have been describing in Germany and Europe. Some specialists believe just the opposite. They are convinced that the encouragement of original-version movie-going is merely a language-teacher's illusion—at best it only improves the tempo of fast reading abilities as the cinema fans wolf down the sub-titles.

SO ON WITH the European electoral campaign, and may whoever can make himself understood—either without sound, or over and above curious sub-titling—emerge as the better man, and win. My German friends in TV are going to be busy; they hope to squeeze in "foreign programmes" live (or *life*, as they often say); news-programmes are to be exchanged with London, Paris, Rome; special outside experts are being imported into panels and round-tables. But if you have been following the above, you will know what we will be seeing in these exciting days of the birth of a new Parliament in a new Europe—*ein Stummfilm*, a silent film, with strangely gesticulating characters on the screen, all talking with the same voice, the faultless borrowed accent of our best local deep-throated broadcasters.

Solzhenitsyn & the Russian Intellectual Tradition

Some Critical Remarks—By RICHARD PIPES

THOSE, who, like myself, had listened to Solzhenitsyn in the Harvard Yard on that drizzly June afternoon carried away the impression that we had heard a devastating attack on the contemporary West—for its loss of courage, its self-indulgence, its self-deception. It was as if the speaker, a refugee from hell, had excoriated us, denizens of purgatory, for not living in paradise.

On re-reading it,[1] however, the brunt of the address seems to lie on a more abstract historico-philosophical plane. The chaotic structure of the speech, which must have been written in fits and starts, accounts for the fact that the centre of its gravity lies toward the end, in a place where the reader expects a summary. It is on the last seven or eight pages that the author addresses himself to his central concern, the underlying causes of what he perceives to be the malaise of the entire modern world, West as well as East.

Solzhenitsyn's principal points can be summarised as follows (more schematically than he does it himself, for he leaves much unsaid).

Man is inherently a corrupt being, the "carrier of inner evil." The rise, first of Humanism and then of the Enlightenment, has led Western society to renounce this truth, and replace it with the false and pernicious idea of man's perfectibility. The consequence has been a culture centred on man as a self-sufficient (autonomous) creature, and dedicated to the "cult of earthly well-being" with all that this idea implies, including limitless self-indulgence. Through the medium of socialism, the "humanist autonomous irreligious consciousness" has penetrated Russia, producing Communism. (Although Solzhenitsyn has nothing but scorn for the theory of the "convergence" of Western and Communist societies, he firmly believes in their close spiritual affinity and blames Russia's Communism on the West.) In the West, the culture of Humanism has led to a state of perpetual discontent: in the East, to tyranny and genocide. Both cultures have this in common that they deny man's inner evil. Though its manifestations happen to be much more repugnant in the East, there is really not much to choose between the two systems locked in mortal combat. The probability is that the

[1] Aleksandr I. Solzhnitsyn, *A World Split Apart: Commencement Address Delivered at Harvard University, June 8, 1978* (Harper & Row, New York, 1978).

This book has the Russian text on the left side and an (inferior) English translation on the other. The passages I cite all are my own translations from the original Russian.

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Eastern variant will triumph because its leaders are more determined and less scrupulous. The West is doomed. In the long run, however, if mankind survives the coming catastrophe (probably a non-nuclear war) a higher civilisation will emerge which will satisfy, in just measure, both the spiritual and the physical needs of man: a synthesis of the Middle Ages and Modernity, as it were.

THE GENERAL LINE OF THIS ARGUMENT is familiar to anyone who has read in the history of Russian thought and literature. Indeed, as we shall note, in places Solzhenitsyn uses virtually the same language as his 19th-century forerunners. This fact emphasises the remarkable continuity of Russian intellectual history, especially its conservative strain, to which Solzhenitsyn indubitably belongs. Each generation of Russians seems to discover afresh the same answers, partly because the problems which they confront, decade after decade, remain so strikingly similar.

The central postulate of Solzhenitsyn's case—the corrupt nature of man, and (its corollary) the futility of manipulating his social and political environment—is axiomatic for all Russian conservatives.

Two hundred years ago, in the reign of Catherine II, this was the issue which had caused the conservative Novikov and Russian's first radical, Radishchev, to go their separate ways. In the reign of Alexander I, Karamzin raised his powerful voice against the reforms of Speranskii in the name of this doctrine: "What matters are not forms, but men." Later, in the middle of the 19th century, to the claim of Turgenev's "nihilist" Bazarov of *Fathers and Sons*: "In a well-constructed society it will be quite irrelevant whether man is stupid or wise, evil or good", the conservative Dostoevsky responded: "The main thing is to love others as oneself—that is the main thing, and this is all, and nothing more is needed. As soon as you know this, everything will be arranged. . . ." On the eve of World War I, the symposium *Vekhi (Landmarks)* shook Russian opinion with the thesis that the intellectual and moral improvement of man had to precede political and social reform. One's attitude to this question—whether or not human improvement takes precedence over social reform—is the touchstone by which is determined a person's place in the Russian intellectual tradition.

AS MANY OBSERVERS have already noted, Solzhenitsyn's conservatism is Slavophile in character. There are, indeed, many similarities between his criticism of the West with its prognosis of the West's inevitable decline and the historical philosophy of the Slavophiles. But the differences are no less striking. In its original form, as popularised in the 1840s and 1850s, Slavophilism contained strong liberal elements. Suffice it to say that its adherents admired England and supported the Great Reforms of Alexander II, including the reform of the judiciary, based on Western models. They also advocated untrammelled freedom of speech, which so annoys Solzhenitsyn. These men were addicted to a *Schwärmerei* peculiar to romanticism, collecting folk songs and dressing up in 17th-century costumes.

Solzhenitsyn's Slavophilism is of a different vintage. It is of a later variety which first arose in the 1870s in response to the emergence in Russia of revolutionary radicalism. Its pathos is anti-demonic. The outstanding spokesmen of this kind of conservative nationalism were Dostoevsky and his friend, Constantine Pobedonostsev, the *éminence grise* of late Imperial Russia. They, it seems to me, are Solzhenitsyn's direct intellectual ancestors. To convince oneself of this affinity one only has to take in hand Pobedonostsev's *Reflections of a*

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Russian Statesman (1896). Both in tone and argument Solzhenitsyn's Harvard speech is so close to this work that with only minor changes whole passages from it could be seamlessly incorporated into Pobedonostsev's book.

IT IS THE CENTRAL THEME of Dostoevsky's great novels that the hubris of humanistic rationalism—what Solzhenitsyn calls the "autonomy of man from any superior power"—inexorably leads to crime. Morality from which religion has been extracted causes Raskolnikov to kill an old woman money-lender, the young Verkhovensky to sow the seeds of murder around him, and Ivan Karamazov to inspire the assassination of his own father. For Dostoevsky, socialism and communism were natural and inevitable offshoots of liberalism, just as they are for Solzhenitsyn. It is pure Dostoevsky when Solzhenitsyn tells us that "humanism, which has entirely lost its Christian heritage" cannot withstand the challenge of radicalism and ends up in communism—a system which for him signifies murder on a mass scale.

How close the affinity between Solzhenitsyn and his forerunners from the arch-conservative reign of Alexander III becomes apparent when we compare his statements on Western law and journalism with corresponding passages from Pobedonostsev's *Reflections*.

Time and again, Solzhenitsyn returns to attacks on Western legality as an empty, inhuman formalism which is capable of allowing the criminal to go free and preventing the victim from obtaining redress, all the time enriching the lawyer. "[Western] laws are so complicated", Solzhenitsyn complains, "that an ordinary man is helpless dealing with them without a specialist." Pobedonostsev (who, incidentally, was himself an eminent jurist) would have concurred: "The simple man can-

More Words

CHANGE AND DECAY in all around we see. But not all change is decay, and even some decay turns into new life. . . . The trouble with this amiably tolerant attitude—to language as to other things—is that, like Johnson's theatrical delusion, it has no certain limitation. Geniuses may misspell, but is misspelling a sign of genius? Admittedly, tolerance is nicer than objection, for complaints and corrections can easily degenerate into what Jan Morris (ENCOUNTER, April 1978) calls an "odious mixture of the hectoring, the condescending, the patronising, the sarcastic and the self-satisfied." After a radio talk on common misspellings (printed in ENCOUNTER, December 1975), I received a disgusted letter from a listener: "I thought you were a poet . . . how can you concern yourself with such trivialities?"

Incidentally, it might be worth collecting common notions of "the poet": for example, "What! You're a poet and you watch television*?" (often the only sort of vision available to one); or "You actually travel on the* Underground*?" (a rich compost for poems); or "You mean you work in an* office*?" (a place made to work in). A contrasting set of notions of "the poet" is held by the more sophisticated, who quietly remove breakables, send their daughters to bed, and lock up the liquor.*

One common misspelling is "miniscule", conceivably betraying the influence of the once popular and still lamented miniskirt. . . . Since this form can be found in the highest circles it is possible that behind one's back it has been decided that "miniscule" means "very small indeed", while "minuscule" is now reserved for a kind of cursive script developed in the seventh century—as the dictionary has it.

SPEAKERS on television and radio may be thought to bear a special responsibility towards language, and on the whole they show commendable concern. It would be futile to quarrel with them. Usage, they might well say, always carries the day: whatever is, is right—and lo and behold, investigation shows that their mispronunciation or misuse has carried the day and is indeed usage. Such is the potency of those commentators who tell us about "the de*cade*", virtually wiping out the old "*dec*ade." One perceives the rationale in this, since more often than not the speaker is dwelling on some gloomy aspect of "a low dishonest decayed." The stress shows the strain.

THE FOLLOWING *are mispronunciations—sorry, pronunciations—heard on television, and coming not from the laity (faced with a camera or microphone, they can be forgiven anything) but from professional broadcasters. Thus "Forte" as two syllables, "irrefutable", "communal" (to do with people communing, presumably, and to be distinguished from communism), "lamentable", "integral", "estimate" (as a verb), "litchen" ("now rare in educated use": S.O.D.), "Grorn Prix" (which began in motor-racing but has since spread to show-jumping). In a different category are such odd accentings as "St* John's *Wood", although no other wood or saint is involved. Similarly, "between you and I" (after all, the speaker has got the polite bit right and didn't say "between me and you"), "reserved for Whites only", "which today is scorned upon by many" (a telescoping of "looked down upon" and "pour scorn upon"), and "the crowd have gone literally mad" (which could mean what it says: you need to be halfway round the bend to go to a football match in the first place). . . . Not a large haul, but still a contrast to the care broadcasters take with difficult foreign names.*

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not know the law, or vindicate his rights . . . he falls into the hands of attorneys, the sworn mechanics of the machine of justice." Like Solzhenitsyn, Pobedonostsev assailed the Western legal system for concentrating on the "technical" aspect of the law at the expense of "justice."

THERE ARE IN Solzhenitsyn's speech also virulent attacks on the Western press for its arrogance, superficiality, and censorship of unfashionable thoughts. He then demands:

> "What is the responsibility of the journalist and newspaper before the reading public or history? . . . Under what electoral law has [the Western press] been elected. . . ?"

And here is Pobedonostsev:

> "Who are these representatives of this terrible power. Public Opinion? Whence derives their right and authority to rule in the name of the community. . . ?"

Pobedonostsev answers:

> "The journalist . . . derives his authority from no election."

Such examples could be multiplied. There is, in both writers, nearly a century apart, the same contempt for Western parliamentary institutions ("The Great Falsehood of our Time", for Pobedonostsev, the occasion for a derisory aside for Solzhenitsyn), and for the whole institutional apparatus protecting the political and civil freedoms of Western man. Not the least quality they share in common is the fundamental vice of Russian conservative (and radical) intellectuals, that of never conceding a point to an adversary—a vice that is only second in its debilitating effect on Russian life to the habit of spinning thoughts about social and political matters without any consideration to their practicability or acceptability to the mass of mankind.

(including a Dirty One)

I HAD INTENDED **to suggest that the rate of giving in to changes or decays of English appeared to have accelerated of late, and that these days one gives in to practically everything. But then I remembered a small victory over the powers of darkness, albeit inexplicable and perhaps accidental.**

Some while ago I had a hand in publishing a powerfully imaginative work of fiction, set in Dickensian London, and called *The Albatross Muff*. The muff in question was made from the plumage of an albatross, the sinister symbolism of which will not elude many readers. Trouble set in long before the book saw the light of day. The title, I was advised, would *not do*, because the word "muff" had obscene or (worse?) extremely vulgar associations. These were not in fact unknown to me, but it had never crossed my mind that anyone could suppose the novel to be a variation on the theme of Leda and the Swan.

TO START WITH *I had to break the news to the author. This was embarrassing, since she hadn't the faintest idea of what I was talking about. Then I tried the title on passers-by. The innocent among them assumed I was talking smut and grew annoyed because they couldn't recognise it. The serious-minded urged me to stand firm, to fight for the rights of a perfectly decent and even indispensable word. But others, more worldly-wise, said, "No, it won't do—you can easily find another title, so why kick against the pricks?"*

The author and I stood firm. And, though the title may have alienated publishers in America where this particular obscenity has wider currency, in this country not a single snigger or snort or cry of horror greeted the book's appearance. We are, of course, a nation of bird-lovers.

BUT THAT WAS NOT **the end of it. In due course an offer was made for the paperback rights—on condition that the title was changed. For a new dimension of objection had now revealed itself: the title was "offensive to certain women readers" in that it incorporated an example of male filth-aggression against the female body. To me this *démarche* seemed less a stage in women's liberation than a miserable capitulation—muffish in another sense (*orig. unkn.*)—but the matter was out of my hands.**

SUBSEQUENTLY *I composed a nobly indignant and self-soothing piece to the effect that*

> **In this "liberal" age, word after word is acquiring obscene connotations, and soon the Oxford Dictionary will be the dirtiest book ever published. A new sort of censorship is threatening to set in: we shall be free to speak our dirty minds—but not to speak our mind. We must fight, we must watch our words. To start with, let us have some help from the intellectual public. . . .**

And so forth. Happily this was not published, for when the paperback edition appeared it bore the title—The Albatross Muff. *When one wins a point, or a point is won for one, one hardly likes to inquire how it came about. Perhaps nobody could think of an alternative? Perhaps it had been realised that, even so, the title was exactly the right one?*

Just as Wuthering Heights *was the right title, though someone must surely have said, "It won't do, Miss Brontë. It's no use your telling us it's a* significant provincial adjective*—people will think it's a misprint for Withering. . . ."*

D. J. Enright

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AS EVERYTHING THAT COMES FROM HIS pen, Solzhenitsyn's Harvard address shines with incorruptible courage. For it surely took no mean bravery to admonish a Harvard audience (of all audiences) for the participation of American "activists" in the "betrayal" of Viet Nam and Cambodia. And how much else he says that needs saying and is not because of the tyranny of conformism! His contemptuous reference to the "short-sighted politician who had hurriedly signed the Viet Nam capitulation"—his scorn for the political amoralism of America's "very prominent figures", who, by confusing good and evil, truth and lie, promote the triumph of "Absolute Evil"—his description of government functionaries who seek to justify their cowardice with intellectual and even moral arguments—this is well said and was perceived as such by the Harvard audience which, for all its bewilderment, responded from time to time to its tormentor's exhortations with bursts of self-conscious applause.

And yet, like many conservatives, Solzhenitsyn is far better at diagnosing ills than at providing remedies. In the end, his kind of conservatism, like that of his *ancien régime* predecessors, strikes me as unconvincing, and this for two reasons.

His criticism of the spiritual corruption and cowardice of Western society, correct as it is, tells only half the story. It is incontestably true that the American press is nowhere as open a forum of opinion as it pretends to be, and that it has arrogated to itself a great deal of arbitrary power. But still it is this very same press that has rescued Solzhenitsyn from the Soviet police, made it possible for him to find refuge in America, and broadcast his Harvard address to all ends of the globe. Admittedly, our legal formalism can be exasperating and provides too good a living for too many lawyers. Nevertheless, it merits saying that our soulless "formal" legalism has prevented in America the establishment of a *Gulag* system—something that the Slavophile idea of "humane" justice as above the "cold" law has dismally failed to do in Russia. For all the material self-indulgence evident in American society, indeed often repelling and destructive of spiritual life, I believe Americans to be more charitable and more given to good works than are ordinary Russians whose poverty and insecurity forces them to fend for themselves, allowing neither time nor mind to help others. Every dark phenomenon of Western culture has also its bright side—the product, ultimately, of those very qualities of our life which Solzhenitsyn so criticises, namely freedom, legality, and well-being.

BUT SOLZHENITSYN SEEMS WRONG on a still deeper level where at stake is the highest good as he perceives it: the ultimate goal of our life on earth, "moral elevation", or "leaving life a being of a higher order than one had entered it." This end is certainly attainable only by dint of an individual effort and possibly only in an environment where the individual is free—free not only to choose the "right" path, but also to err; and, through error, to learn. Furthermore, morality is a goal that the individual can realise only in society, for which reason he requires protection by a system of objective law (not subjective "justice") to save him from perpetual, unregulated conflict with fellow men. And, finally, it presupposes a certain minimum standard of life. For apart from a handful of saintly natures, human beings cannot dedicate themselves to moral improvement if unable to satisfy their basic wants. So, in the end, freedom, law, and well-being are not to be scorned. They are insufficient, to be sure, but still indispensable conditions for that "moral elevation" of man which Solzhenitsyn rightly regards as life's most sublime task.

To attain this end we must accept, even as we try to change, freedom that degenerates into licence, legality that constricts, and well-being that turns into an obsessive accumulation and consumption of material goods. Society is not an association for the joint pursuit of virtue, since one man's virtue is another man's iniquity; for which reason such a conception inevitably leads to despotism. It is, rather, an environment for the mutual tolerance *and* restraint of human weakness. How paradoxical it is that Western culture which is alleged to rest on the notion of human perfectibility makes the broadest provisions for sin—whereas the kind of ideology that Solzhenitsyn espouses and which deems man incorrigibly evil insists on his never straying!

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Can One Explain the "Demonic"?

Problems of German History—By FRITZ STERN

THE GERMAN HISTORIAN Ludwig Dehio wrote (in 1951) that

> the prerequisite for *any* creative German response after the epoch of the two World Wars is the unconditional recognition of the terrible role that we have played in this period. We were the last, and also the most demonic, hegemonial power of the declining old Europe. . . .

It was a succinct, programmatic statement: Germany's repeated bids for world power must be seen in the light of previous hegemonial aspirations, all of which occurred at a time and indeed as part of Europe's ascendancy in the world. Germany's bid came as Europe's power was already shrinking, as witness America's role in the defeats of Germany. By invoking the demonic (a category more familiar to Germans than to others), Dehio sought to suggest some dark, inexplicable energy that drives or lures genius and greatness into the nether world of criminality. From 1890 to 1945 dark, irrational forces did batter Germany, and finally left a legacy of inhumanity such as no power had bequeathed before.

Of the centrality and complexity of German history there can be no doubt. Germany's reaching for greatness—her political expansionism and her intellectual-artistic innovations—shaped the history of our era. In a sense we are all victims and heirs of German history: victims because earlier convulsions still affect our lives, heirs because we continue to live off the great achievements of German culture. The German past is unlikely to lose its grim fascination; it is a challenge to our historical understanding, as it is to our moral sense. The injury wrought to our collective self-regard has yet to be fully grasped. Finally, Germany's persistent squandering of its own power may tell us something about modern politics and the uses of power generally.

For all these reasons the study of German history has attracted extraordinary talent—inside the two Germanies and abroad, especially in Britain and America. Since 1945 there has been a flood of memoirs and monographs dealing with the German past. There have been some major scholarly battles as well, but never drawn along national lines; in fact, West German and foreign historians have cooperated as never before.

To master the details of this new scholarship is a daunting task, and hence the appearance of Gordon Craig's *Germany 1866–1945*[1] would be welcome under any circumstances; its appearance in the *Oxford History of Modern Europe*, edited by Lord Bullock and Sir William Deakin, is particularly auspicious. For that series has been extraordinarily successful—despite or perhaps because of the fact that it has mirrored the diversity of historical writing today. Twenty years ago appeared the first volume in that series, A. J. P. Taylor's history of European diplomacy, an audacious if perversely conventional effort. Taylor transcended the older genre of diplomatic history by writing a fine first chapter on the context in which statesmen had to act—and then proceeded blithely to depict their policies as if that context did not exist, as if, in fact, they could operate autonomously. He maximised the possibilities of that older genre by writing with verve, insight, and cheerful indifference to received opinion.

The editors of the Oxford History seem to afford laudable latitude to their authors. The most recent work before Craig—Theodore Zeldin's two volumes on France—is defiantly unconventional, the most comprehensive and brilliant study of a people's political culture I know of. A. J. P. Taylor and Theodore Zeldin suggest something of the range of historical writing today—and while the very multiplicity of approaches is a sign of health as compared to the sterility of orthodoxy, it also underlines the danger of an excessive parcelling-out of the past, an endless slicing up of it into discrete bits, until the past in its original unity recedes ever further.

IN ASKING Gordon Craig to write the second of two projected volumes on Germany—the first will also be written by an American, the remarkable young historian, James Sheehan—the editors

[1] *Germany 1866–1945*. By GORDON A. CRAIG. Oxford University Press, £10.

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selected a seasoned craftsman, whose *Politics of the Prussian Army* has been a landmark since its appearance in 1955. The virtues long associated with Craig's work are again the hallmark of this narrative of German politics, a synthesis of most of the recent monographic literature. Craig is a master at reconstructing the tangled web of political, diplomatic, and military history. He has an admirable grasp of historical personages, of the immediate circumstances of decisions, of motives and unintended consequences, of power politics, and of the workings of bureaucracy and government. His individual portraits are often gems of perception; future assessments will want to reckon with his sketches of Wilhelm II and Hitler, of Stresemann and Brüning (the last two surprisingly benevolent). He writes with a compelling clarity, an unflagging energy, and a style attuned to the drama of the subject; he has a deft sense for the apt quote or the striking phrase. Detachment and judiciousness mark his own work; he is hard on causes he would tend to favour—such as the Social Democrats—and understanding of men and movements he abhors. Craig's account of Hitler, according to him the only figure in Weimar who possessed political genius, attests the possibilities of fair-mindedness and insight.

At the beginning Craig implicitly abjures what might be called the perspective of 1933 or 1945, that is, the effort of seeing the German past as the necessary prelude to Nazism:

> The brief history of united Germany . . . demands the attention of reflective men, not only for what it has to teach about the role of fear and cupidity and obtuseness in human affairs, about the seduction of power and the consequences of political irresponsibility, and about the apparently limitless inhumanity that man is capable of inflicting upon his fellows, but because it also has much to say about courage and steadfastness, about devotion to the cause of liberty, and about resistance to the evils of tyranny. It is important to recall that . . . there were always men and women . . . who risked their careers and their lives to create the kind of Germany in which [the triumph of humanity] could come true. What is recounted here is as much their story as that of the powers that triumphed over them.

What follows is a narrative of issues and events, of leading persons and historic actors. Despite his intention, Craig concentrates on the powers that triumphed rather than on the people who resisted. He describes—perhaps better than anyone else before him—the political career of unified Germany. Here is an account of the unbroken difficulty of governing modern Germany—from Bismarck's régime that was "based on the premise of social immobility" to Wilhelm II's hectic apathy. His treatment of the November Revolution is good, and picking up from remarks by Count Kessler about German officers sporting epaulettes again by mid-November and from Bakunin's despair in 1848 about Germans not burning public buildings, he says in an unusually blunt judgment:

> . . . it is no exaggeration to say that [the Republic] failed in the end partly because German officers were allowed to put their epaulettes back on again so quickly and because the public buildings were not burned down, along with the bureaucrats who inhabited them.

He depicts Weimar where crisis described normality, and analyses what Arnold Toynbee once called the "malignant chaos" of the Third Reich. Craig grasps the connections between domestic and foreign policies—connections that may have been particularly intricate in the case of Germany. So many German statesmen sought to repeat Bismarck's use of foreign triumphs to compel domestic critics. Perhaps this extra pressure further blurred the vision of leaders; the search for greatness ended in the historic defeats of 1918 and 1945, which opened up the possibilities of domestic reform.

CRAIG'S EMPHASIS is rigorously political; out of twenty chapters he allots only two to cultural developments; but his few pages on education, especially on universities and the conservative professoriate, are incisive and far from pious. Equally forthright is the section on the condition of women, kept in a state of perpetual dependence. Of Weimar culture he says that "in the richness and variety of its cultural accomplishments [it] is second to none in German history." Informative though these forays are, they tend to be discrete essays, insufficiently integrated with the rest of the book. Are there, for example, connections between the condition of women and the general attitude toward politics or *Innerlichkeit*?

To combine analysis with narrative, even to present continuities over time, is one of the hardest tasks of the historian. The narrative here is the broad, stately stream of events; analysis would interrupt the flow. Nor does Craig pause for problems of historiographical disputes. *What happened* and *how*—not *why*—are the questions that inform the book. The record reconstructed is not unfamiliar, in part because of Craig's own previous work.

It is not sensible to wish that the author had written a different kind of book from the successful one he has given us. In fact, it is likely to become a standard work for the political history of modern Germany; its nearest rival, the third volume of Hajo Holborn's magisterial *History of Modern Germany*, is longer and by its philosophical penetration makes greater demands than does

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Craig's work. But there are constraints that the genre imposed on Craig, and his omissions might have illuminated certain aspects of German history, as he himself would be likely to admit. His very first sentence asks: "Is it a mistake to begin with Bismarck?" The question reflects his concern with changing historiographical modes, but having answered it in the negative, he resolutely stays with political leaders, with events. There is almost a kind of self-denying austerity to the book, as he defiantly clings to the surface of politics, with but occasional excursions elsewhere.

There are drawbacks to this traditional method; a few examples will suffice. Craig acknowledges that Imperial politics were deeply affected by the social transformation that took place between Unification and the Great War. But one paragraph on economic developments between 1870 and 1890—and that based on two books written some 40 years ago—is inadequate (particularly as compared to three pages on the Kruger Despatch and four on the Zabern affair). Urbanisation and secularisation are mentioned in passing. Social stratification or the life and assumptions of the lower classes are hardly considered at all. What James Joll has felicitously called the "unspoken assumptions" remain virtually unexamined; Ralf Dahrendorf's authoritative analysis of the historic barriers to German democracy, though acknowledged, is not pursued. The book is a study of politics without social roots; the concreteness of the political recital is itself a form of abstraction.

IN FOREIGN POLICY the emphasis on events also slights an analysis of some of the deeper processes—the emergence, for example, of the Anglo-German antagonism, one of the most fateful elements in recent history. Or to take a more basic example: Craig necessarily mentions (but always in passing) the habit of self-delusion, the vast overestimation of one's own strength, mixed often with what he calls: "This desire for recognition, which was to be found in all sections of society, [and which] was the biggest political fact of the last years of the [19th] century." But why this thirst for recognition, this longing for acclaimed power coupled with this exaggerated sense of insecurity? Why this wilful blindness, this unconditionality (to use Craig's own favourite term) which hobbled German expansionism before, during, and after the Great War? Craig speaks of Ludendorff's "megalomania", says of a major decision in July 1918 that "irrationality could hardly be carried further"—and yet this habitual delusion is nowhere fully examined.

THE IRRATIONAL played an extraordinary role in German politics and culture. After comprehensively discussing the great German Inflation of the early 1920s, Craig comments that "its political cost had been great, and it left wounds in the collective psyche that did not heal in the years of relative stability. . . ." But that psyche had been battered before. The German Youth Movement—barely mentioned in passing—had manifested something of a deep psychic dissatisfaction; the War had torn into that psyche, and Versailles outraged it. Can one understand Hitler, that orator-therapist, without some sense of the unconscious? Craig does quote Otto Strasser's famous description of Hitler in a mass meeting:

> "His words go like an arrow to the target; he touches each private wound on the raw, liberating the mass unconscious, expressing its innermost aspirations, telling it what it most wants to hear."

The vulnerability of the German psyche to Hitler was more important for his rise than all the putative funds contributed by monopoly capitalists. Twenty-five years ago, Franz Neumann, whose *Behemoth* had been a brilliant Marxist analysis of the Nazi State, gave a lecture on the rise of Nazism called "Anxiety and Politics", the very title indicating a corrective to a view that had given insufficient attention to the irrational. Peter Loewenberg's recent work suggests how meticulous scholarship can be illuminated by psychological insight.

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Craig's discussion of Nazism is good, though a comparative dimension would have strengthened it. The Nazi régime depended on willing submission as much as on the latent threat of terror, and Craig documents the capitulation of the intellectual world by elaborating on the painful examples of Gerhart Hauptmann, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger, and Gottfried Benn. By contrast, very little is said about the ambiguous and divided response of the Christian churches, though their accommodation and belated, intermittent resistance had an even larger impact than did the ideological subservience and opportunism of intellectuals.

One last example of the difficulty of the genre may be adduced. With his usual forthrightness, Craig says:

> The extermination of the Jews is the most dreadful chapter in German history, doubly so because the men who effected it closed their senses to the reality of what they were doing by taking pride in the technical efficiency of their actions and, at moments when conscience threatened to break in, telling themselves that they were doing their duty and serving their country.

But were there not antecedents—both in the spectacular rise of German Jewry and in the growth of anti-Semitism—that need to be explicated if that dreadful chapter can be even remotely grasped? A few scattered sentences or an occasional paragraph on anti-Semitism seem insufficient.

Craig has an implicit sense of the importance of historical reconstruction. Speaking of Hitler's intended "scorched earth" policy in 1945 (which, if executed, would have been far worse for Germany than any imaginable variant of the Morgenthau Plan) Craig comments:

> The German people survived [in 1945], but only after they had been stripped of everything that had obscured their vision of reality during the drunken years of destiny and had been brought to *Stunde Null*, the cold grey dawn in which they were challenged at long last to come to terms with their history.

This coming-to-terms with that particular past is a continuing process; and Craig's book is a part of that process. One hopes that more comprehensive analyses—of the same outstanding literary quality—will follow. German history will continue to make exacting demands on the historian. What Dehio called "the demonic" cannot be caught in a recital of events—nor can the substratum of society, its rich texture, and its bonds be thus explained. The writing of German history requires what all historical inquiry calls for—only more so: it requires breadth, it requires new perspectives, adapted in part from outside narrow professionalism, from the intellectual culture at large, perspectives which would (to use a phrase of the late Richard Hofstadter) add to "the speculative richness of history."

Science & Anarchism

Notes on Feyerabend—By JOHN NAUGHTON

THE RETURN of the Ayatollah Khomeini to Iran has thrown some unexpected light on all that we hold most dear. Implicit in Western media coverage of "the most amazing comeback since Lazarus", as someone put it, was a palpable sense of journalistic astonishment at the sheer effrontery of the man—an elderly religious leader who has the temerity, in this day and age, to set up a religious state. Suppose, however, that the scenario had been slightly different—specifically that Khomeini had been an engineer with a PhD from MIT, returning to set up a government of technocrats. Would we then have been quite so astonished, or so apprehensive about the outcome? I think not. The reason, of course, is that we have become so accustomed to science's usurpation of the place of religion as the constitutional bedfellow of the state that we no longer notice anything unusual about the arrangement. Our unthinking acceptance of this state of affairs is all the more remarkable when one considers that it is such a comparatively recent development—essentially dating only from the Second World War. The force of habit is indeed powerful, and perfectly capable of inducing strange inconsistencies in behaviour. How many liberal intellectuals, for example, object vigorously to the compulsory teaching of religion in state schools, but raise not a whimper at the compulsory teaching of physics and chemistry, and the indoctrination of children with the notion that the view of reality afforded by the physical sciences is the "true" one?

Unpalatable though the thought may be, there are some parallels between the obeisance paid by the contemporary lay public to science and the servile respect shown by medieval peasants to the Church. No doubt there is an element of utilitarian cunning involved—a subconscious desire to pay homage to any institution which enjoys such close

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relations with the rich and powerful. But the current willingness to cede psychic dominance to scientists reflects deeper sentiments also. Among these are: a suspicion that science, like the medieval church, has cornered the market in absolutes like "truth"; a belief that science possesses a special method which transcends the limitations of ordinary mortals; and an overweening confidence that, whatever else it does, modern science delivers the goods.

To be sure, there are cracks in the façade. The honeymoon enjoyed by early post-war science is definitely over, and some sectors of the public are becoming increasingly suspicious of, if not downright hostile to, the symbiotic relationship between big science and even bigger government. This disaffection has been fuelled by recent controversies over nuclear power and the environment, and seems unlikely to diminish. Yet, in an odd way, these controversies also leave the image of science remarkably untarnished in the public mind. The spectacle of distinguished scientists on both sides of the ecological barricades has perhaps dented the popular myth of the monolithic homogeneity of their profession, but it has not diminished the reputation of scientists as rational seekers after truth, any more than the commitment of lawyers to justice is doubted simply because, like dice, they can lie on any side.

To a remarkable extent, therefore, the image of science as something special survives. Its uniqueness is perceived as stemming from two sources: the belief that it is a rational enterprise possessed of a special "method" for unravelling the secrets of nature; and the belief that it has been, without exception, the most successful human enterprise of all time.

That this popular image of science amounts to a myth (in the sense of a purely fictitious narrative involving supernatural persons) is a question I will come to. Before doing so, however, it is worth pondering the nature of this image and its sources. Broadly speaking, it seems to be a strange (and to a philosopher, inexplicable) blend of (*1*) logical-empiricism stemming from Hume on the one hand, and Comte on the other, and (*2*) the "critical rationalism" of Popper. A child of such divergent epistemological parentage is bound to be an ambiguous and inconsistent creature and, like many miscegenations, highly sensitive and aggressive. The combination of a positivist criterion of meaningfulness *and* a hypothetico-deductive method (ably romanticised by distinguished scientists like P. B. Medawar and John Eccles) has provided a formidable ideology for anyone disposed to defend the special status of science in our society.

But perhaps the strangest feature of the popular image of science is the gap between it and the picture painted by contemporary philosophers of science. There is undoubtedly an element of McLuhan's "rearview mirrorism" at work here—i.e. the tendency to view the present and future through the conceptual spectacles of the past. In a recent interview in the BBC Television Series *Men of Ideas,* Hilary Putnam has observed that physicists tend to subscribe to the methodological views which were current 50 years ago. This may be an unduly harsh judgment, but it reflects similar statements made from time to time by other philosophically-aware scientists, notably Einstein.

In any event, there can be no doubt that the public conception of science as an example of "critical rationalism" in action has been in trouble for decades in philosophical circles. It has proved impossible, for example, to reconcile Popper's picture of science with that of T. S. Kuhn, and particularly with the latter's description of the process of "revolutionary" change.[1] More generally, one can say that it has proved markedly difficult to impose any kind of rational or "logical" reconstruction on the history of scientific development. The most elaborate attempt in recent years to save science from charges of irrationality was undoubtedly that of Imre Lakatos—whose concept of "scientific research programmes" represented a brave attempt to construct a methodology which would allow the scientist his creative freedom without threatening methodological "law and order."[2] But even this rescue attempt has been shown to be inadequate: for example, Lakatos' position depends crucially on his assumption that there is a single, timeless, scientific method; and more importantly, despite the significance of his idea that research programmes rather than individual theories should be the basic "unit" of methodological appraisal, he provides no "rational" criteria for choosing between rival research programmes.

IT IS AGAINST THIS background that the work of the Berkeley philosopher Paul Feyerabend must be viewed. An itinerant European intellectual and protégé of Lakatos, he has found in California a congenial base from which to launch periodical guerrilla raids on traditional bastions of the philosophy of science. His book *Against Method*[3] has acquired something of the status of a minor classic, and has brought down on his head the wrath of the methodological establishment.

In broad terms, *Against Method* is well described

[1] See Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, 1970).

[2] Imre Lakatos, "History of Science and its Rational Reconstructions", *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science* (1970), Vol. 8.

[3] Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method* (New Left Books, 1975).

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by its subtitle: *Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*. Its starting point is the failure of those, who, like Popper and Lakatos, have attempted rational reconstructions of science.[4] Feyerabend took the lessons of this failure to what he regards as their logical conclusion, and argued that the most successful scientific inquiries have never proceeded according to the rational method at all. Citing the arguments which Galileo employed to defend the Copernican revolution, Feyerabend claimed to show that Galileo's success depended not on prediction, refutation, logical argument or any other tool of the critical-rationalist's trade, but rather on a mixture of rhetoric, subterfuge, and propaganda—the classic weapons of anarchists and opportunists everywhere. To this interpretation of Galileo's behaviour, Feyerabend appended the argument that scientists behave like epistemological anarchists for the very good reason that they cannot make progress unless they do so. This led him to a celebrated conclusion which, because it is often misinterpreted, is worth quoting in full:

> "It is clear, then, that the idea of a fixed method, or of a fixed theory of rationality, rests on too naïve a view of man and his social surroundings. To those who look at the rich material provided by history, and who are not intent on impoverishing it in order to please their lower instincts, their craving for intellectual security in the form of clarity, precision, 'objectivity', 'truth', it will become clear that there is only *one* principle that can be defended under *all* circumstances and in *all* stages of human development. It is the principle: *anything goes*." (Emphasis in original)

Against Method is a rich and complex book, so any attempt to set out its conceptual structure in summary form is bound to cut some corners—as Ernest Gellner found to his cost when he attempted the task, only to be duly savaged for his pains by Feyerabend.[5] Nevertheless, the task is worth attempting. The main argument of the book runs as follows:

(*1*) The actual history of science suggests that what are regarded by scientists and philosophers of

[4] The book is, in fact, an expanded version of an essay of the same title which appeared in the 1970 volume of *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, which was conceived as one half of a dialogue with Lakatos. Sadly, however, the latter's death precluded the exchange envisaged.

[5] Ernest Gellner, "Beyond Truth and Falsity", *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* (1975), Vol. 26; Paul Feyerabend, "Logic, Literacy and Professor Gellner", *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* (1976), Vol. 27.

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science as major advances in knowledge contradict all available methodologies.

(*2*) This suggests that universal methodological doctrines or principles which abstract both from the *content* of theories and the *context* of the debates about them are false.

(*3*) This is so because scientific research always violates major methodological rules *and cannot do otherwise*.

(*4*) Because of the difficulty of distinguishing very general principles of method from criteria of truth, it follows that we can neither distinguish between good and bad *methods* nor between good and bad substantive *theories*.

(*5*) Hence rationalist attempts to restrict the proliferation of theories cannot be justified.

EVEN SUCH A CRUDE SUMMARY indicates that *Against Method* represents a frontal attack on many things which we hold most dear. The ferocity of the assault, however, is greatly amplified by the style of the book. Feyerabend claims that what he is trying to do is inject a little life into debates about the philosophy of science. His method of doing so, however, is curious in the extreme: it is to mix a literary cocktail of verbal clowning, barbed invective, technical argument, and historical interpretation, and shake well until it explodes in the reader's face. "I hope", he writes at one point, "that . . . the reader will remember me as a flippant Dadaist and *not* as a serious anarchist." At another point, he reminds us that the aims of an epistemological anarchist

> "remain stable, or change as a result of argument, or of boredom, or of a conversion experience, or to impress a mistress, and so on."

Feyerabend also displays a formidable talent for personal abuse. "In my essay", he announces, "I am addressing neither dogs nor logicians." Commenting on Popper's philosophy, he writes that it is

> "but a pale reflection of Mill. It is much more specialised, much more formalistic and élitist, and quite devoid of the concern for individual happiness that is such a feature of Mill. We can understand its peculiarities when we consider (*a*) the background of logical positivism, which plays an important role in *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, (*b*) the unrelenting puritanism of its author (and of most of his followers), and when we remember the influence of Harriet Taylor on Mill's life and on his philosophy. There is no Harriet Taylor in Popper's life."

It will be clear that Feyerabend, like Keynes, is no gentleman in argument. Neither is it surprising

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that such an outrageous cuckoo in the philosophy-of-science nest has been widely (and creatively) misrepresented and misinterpreted. It is often claimed, for example, that he is in the business of making methodological *prescriptions* of a kind which can be summarised in the words "anything goes." A glance at the passage quoted earlier will show that Feyerabend is, in fact, a good deal more cirumspect and subtle than this. Nevertheless, academic disciplines have well-established traditions of ignoring or burying intemperate attacks on their paradigms, and it is noteworthy that, although Feyerabend has been extensively criticised and attacked on various aspects of his thesis, he has not been ignored.

The reason for this is, I believe, twofold: in the first place, for all his anarchistic exuberance, Feyerabend is quite a formidable philosopher of science—as shown recently, for example, by his mastery of the difficult mathematical formalism of J. D. Sneed's reconstruction of classical particle mechanics. Secondly—and more importantly—*Against Method* scores some palpable hits, and goes close to the heart of some major epistemological issues. Feyerabend's critique of Popper and Lakatos, for instance, takes the argument about the deficiencies of rational reconstruction a stage further. The issues raised by *Against Method* are thus interesting to philosophers of science, and have important wider implications.

IN HIS LATEST BOOK, *Science in a Free Society*,[6] Feyerabend turns to consider some of these implications, in addition to giving an autobiographical account of his own intellectual development, expanding some arguments first raised in *Against Method*, and settling (in a section entitled "Conversations with Illiterates") some outstanding scores with its reviewers. *Science in a Free Society* is thus a typical Feyerabendian product, exuding its author's affectionate and admiring attitude towards himself, and a baleful hostility towards his critics, a band of unfortunates whom he regards as either incompetents or imbeciles.

It would seem therefore that neither age nor success is having a mellowing effect on the good Professor. His new book, however, is interesting and provocative in many ways, though much more disjointed than its predecessor. One can, I think, usefully regard them as a matched pair, addressed to two related questions: What is science? And

[6] *Science in a Free Society*. By PAUL FEYERABEND. New Left Books, £7.50.

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what's so great about it? *Against Method* can be seen as an answer to the first question, *Science in a Free Society* as an answer to the second. (The answer given, by the way, is "not much.")

Feyerabend's main target in the second book is the status and prestige of Western science and the problems involved in exerting effective democratic control over it. Far from seeing science as a great liberating force, he regards it as an oppressive, authoritarian and anti-social influence in modern society. General acceptance of the myth of rationalist epistemology has, he argues, led to a position where alternative *Weltanschauungen* and traditions have been wiped out or emasculated. (A reflection of this is that curious fact, mentioned earlier, that people object to indoctrination in a religious tradition, yet cheerfully acquiesce in the imposition of a scientific one, and in fact may not even perceive it as anything other than the "natural order of events.") But although science still rules supreme, it appears to Feyerabend to be highly aggressive in defence of its position. Potential challenges to its authority are resisted and starved of funds, their proponents harassed and ridiculed. The examples he discusses include the original reaction of Western medicine to acupuncture and other Oriental techniques, the Velikovsky affair, and astrology; the prevailing scientific attitude towards the paranormal and parapsychological research suggests itself as an equally forceful example. Proposals for substantive democratic control over science are resisted, and regulation by peer group substituted (precisely what seems to be happening, incidentally, in current moves to bring the regulation of genetic-manipulation research back under the control of experts).

IT'S WORTH NOTING immediately that Feyerabend is not denying the existence of genuine freedoms within science or Western democracies. What concerns him is that these freedoms are defined within a framework of rationalist assumptions. The problem, he argues, is not that there is repression within this rationalist tradition, but that there is an absence of genuine alternative (i.e. non-rationalist) traditions. These have been steadily eroded by the advance of science over the past hundred years. (The last one to go, presumably, was religion which, though still surviving, has to all intents and purposes given up the ghost and retreated to a small patch of psychic territory; in that sense, Bishop Wilberforce, Darwin's celebrated opponent, was its Custer.)

Feyerabend argues that the present dominance of the scientific, rationalist, tradition is not defensible—on epistemological or any other grounds. It has become too powerful for its own, and our, good; and the time has come for society to

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assert democratic control over it and create a climate favourable to a plurality of coexisting traditions, in which the rationalist one will have to fight for survival on a more or less equal basis with its rivals. Just as it was eventually found to be necessary to sever the links between Church and State, the time is now ripe for an analogous separation between the State and Science.

BUT IS DEMOCRATIC CONTROL over science really possible? In particular, do laymen and women possess the kind of knowledge required for the task? Feyerabend refuses to recognise this question as any kind of trump card, and answers it on several levels. Firstly, society cheerfully entrusts all kinds of other vital decisions to laymen—for example that of deciding guilt or innocence before the law. Secondly, there is no guarantee that "experts" will make much better decisions than groups of responsible citizens. Thirdly—and, in his opinion, most important—the need for democratic control is so urgent that lay participation is required "*even if it should lower the success rate of the decisions.*" There are, after all, more important things in life than ensuring the continued prosperity and well-being of scientists.

What are the prerequisites for such an assertion of democratic control? Feyerabend seems to see them as being largely a matter of communal *will*, and cites approvingly the decision of the Chinese Communist régime in the mid-1950s to restore traditional medicine to the status of an officially-approved competitor to "imported" Western medicine. The first requirement for such a decisive act, of course, is the throwing-off of our collective mental shackles—in this case our tacit and unquestioning acceptance of the rationalist myth and its assumed prerogatives.

In bringing the argument round full circle like this, Feyerabend deserves more credit than he has yet received. He has demonstrated that epistemology matters, that it has important real-world implications. His work can be seen as an attempt to expose the extent to which we are all the slaves of some defunct methodologist (to adapt Keynes' celebrated phrase). But Feyerabend's optimism about the possibility of radical structural change, his emphasis on the importance of throwing off the shackles of the rationalist myth, and his faith in the efficacy of decisive acts of communal *will* suggest that his analysis, though blindingly refreshing, is one-dimensional. For if science is really as deeply imbedded in our social structures as our psychic dependence on it would indicate, then it will take rather more than an epistemological revelation to shift it. Epistemology matters, certainly; but money talks.

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Untidy Moments

New Poetry—By ALAN BROWNJOHN

POETRY SEEMS TO BE approaching the end of the 1970s in a moderately confident condition. It's been a less noisy and extrovert decade than its predecessor—no Albert Hall readings, no Roundhouse marathons, something of a retrenchment on the public front generally—but it looks more possible now than it did nine years ago that the distant poles of the art might actually co-exist in the same world. The tide of technological modernism, which seemed ambitious of sweeping everything else aside in poetry as it had apparently done in some of the other arts, has receded a bit. Although it's harder in 1979 than it was in 1969 for a lot of people to obtain a chance of reading poetry (what happened to that brave and successful paperback revolution in poetry publishing?), it is now much easier for people to win sympathy and assistance in writing it: a paradoxical situation, which ought not to be allowed to last too long (and would not, if only the publishers could see how to turn an appetite for practising the art into an appetite for its solid achievements). Things could be worse; and most of the verse in new volumes by either celebrated poets or new ones seems to be written without too fearful a glance towards the public or the critics lest the poet should not be doing the right thing in writing this way, or even writing at all.

All the same, the confidence has only been won, in many cases, after a prolonged battle to grasp the precise standing of the art at the present time, and, having grasped it, to know how best to offer one's talent to readers. A couple of centuries ago it was all brutally simple: the mountain was there to climb, and without a patron or bookseller you stuck in the foothills. Today it is even more brutally *complex*. Considerations of ideology, matters like "utility" and "relevance", cloud the distant peak before you even begin to work out by what means you might achieve it. Poets who can write without showing traces of a struggle to define for themselves the essential nature and function of poetry in our time, and how they should respond to it as their work changes and develops, are perhaps the lucky ones. But it is fairly likely (though not infallibly certain) that they are also dull writers.

DOUGLAS DUNN'S *Barbarians*[1] shows many such traces, and is not dull for a moment. The title-sequence of this new volume, "Barbarian Pastorals", sets out the themes which dominate the book: the poet's simultaneous mistrust of an Oxbridge "culture of connivance" and veneration for the great monuments of that culture, properly used and understood; his sense of a rejuvenating and civilising energy in the "barbarian" forces which will replace a dead empire ("Our coarser artistries will make things grow"); and a desire to return to the roots from which that energy derived. Dunn's barbarians are, indeed, *foederati*, struggling with their consciences in the culture which enlisted them, yet struggling also to master "difficult Latin."

The cultural argument is stated clearly and movingly in a poem in his second section, about a carpenter-fiddler who had mastered Bach and Beethoven with the aid of a six-shilling manual, but would never now be called upon to play them:

So they've told me MacAuley is gone,
Both his fiddles lie under the stairs now
With music by Bach and Beethoven
Beside six bob's worth of ambition.

Let them open your window frames, open your doors,
Think, as they sit on their mended chairs,
Of you, their musician and doctor to wood,
That no one has heard what you understood.

Dunn is—most unfashionably—concerned not only for what remains of the strengths of a working-class tradition, but also for those things of value to which it once aspired through the "Mechanics' Literary Club." It is now customary to settle for a far less taxing, "classless" culture out of the media: we are in the age of the Rock Intellectual, publicity-conscious, condescending, and tone-deaf. All this makes the reasoning of poems like "The Come-on" and "Elegy for the Lost Parish" less easy to receive (and Dunn's recent style, more technically ambitious and sometimes less technically sure, adds to the difficulty) than the well-known, simpler pieces from *Terry Street*.

Barbarians is a more "political" volume than any he has yet produced; but it is abundantly worth listening in to its fierce dialogues between those guarding a patrician culture with the weapons of class, and the "scholarship boys" who want to claim their cultural inheritance:

One day we will leap down, into the garden,
And open the gate—wide, wide.
We too shall be kings' sons and guardians
And then there will be no wall:
Our grudges will look quaint and terrible.

[1] *Barbarians*. By DOUGLAS DUNN. Faber, £3.

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For admirers of Dunn in a less argumentative vein, there are a number of those shorter poems about people, places and objects (situated back at the roots usually) in which he lets his own characteristic kind of humour and inventiveness have free play. "Red Buses" is about resolute attempts to curb licentious behaviour on late-night double-deckers, "Old Things" is a lovely variation on the theme of the "shabby heirlooms" culled from antique shops—and "Watches of Grandfathers" gives such objects of homely dignity an aura of the sinister:

> *They long for the pocket*
> *Of the eldest son, in*
> *The waistcoat he will buy for one,*
> *Who will see his father's eye*
> *Glazed on it, and the age*
> *Of his sons slowly numbered.*

"Glasgow Schoolboys, Running Backwards" manages to encapsulate much of Dunn's seriousness *and* his observant, slightly surreal humour in its four lines:

> *High wind . . . They turn their backs to it, and push*
> *Their crazy strides are chopped in little steps.*
> *And all their lives, like that, they'll have to rush*
> *Forwards in reverse, holding their caps.*

I hope he goes on mixing the "push" of argument with the "craziness" of his freer imaginings as he does in *Barbarians*.

NOT EVEN OUR MOST POPULAR crowd-pullers among poets in the 1960s achieved the audiences of Yevgeny Yevtushenko in his native USSR; and judging from his highly successful recent visit, hardly any single poet on a platform can now match his audience appeal in England. This is partly a tribute to Yevtushenko's superb, astonishing, histrionic gifts, but it has much to do with the generalised, energetic good nature of his poems. You can't take exception to their exuberant, non-committal decency of outlook. They are foreign, but not so much as to worry us with intimations of a culture that would take a bit of understanding—they offer an exoticism which we can respond to without effort or misgiving.

That goes, at least, for the ones which feature in his public performances, and for the manner in which he delivers them. But might not a volume with the title *The Face behind the Face*[2] contain some clues about the "real" man behind the public image?

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[2] *The Face Behind the Face.* By YEVGENY YEVTUSHENKO. Translated by ARTHUR BOYARS and SIMON FRANKLIN. Marion Boyars, £6.95; paper £2.25.

Joseph Conrad

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from a commercial publisher in recent years to set out poetry with some kind of thought for the reader) are immensely readable. Most of them are engaging, and vital in their own way. Yet neither the Whitmanesque avocations of the author's Introduction ("You have to look into the mirror and be able to see . . . a multiplicity of other faces, without which there is no you.") nor the argument of the title poem carry a lot of conviction:

Where does it live, the face behind the face?
Everyone ought
To know all that there is
About the face that is his.

People often haven't a clue
About their very own I.
Each of us makes his own
Best defence counsel.

The real interest here lies in the corners illuminated by shafts of self-doubt; and in the poet's zeal to prove that poets and poetry still retain some status, in his world and ours. To affirm the latter, Yevtushenko brings in Neruda, eloquent and hopeful:

"A poet is beyond the rise and fall of values.
It's not hard to remove us from the centre,
But the spot where they set us down
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And it is possible to see many of the poems in this new book as the extrovert side of a coin which is stamped on the obverse with a deal of self-questioning. Fear is telling him, "Write, write,[1] Before your very soul has vanished"; despair has to be pushed out with the aid of an elusive hope, "like a drop of heaven in a sieve"; he is worried about growing older; and concerned with the problem of cutting the right figure:

Don't puff yourself up
Into terrible turbulence,
Don't drop down
To kiss all the arses!

This vulnerable, more complicated Yevtushenko provides a small quota of fully achieved, intriguingly subtle poems among the routine protests and exhortations. "Chance Encounters" see-saws between attraction and alarm:

Amid the welter of facelessness,
Someone's face suddenly surfaces.

And quite without pressure, Life,
Only pressing you at the throat,
Suddenly, irrepressibly,
Throws the two of you together in the crowd.

And "Kompromise Kompromisovich" adroitly chastises the little victories of comfortable self-deception:

He encourages drinking (in moderation),
Even a little debauchery,
Sinners are worth his while . . .
Kompromise Kompromisovich
Is superb as a writer—
The author
of heart-rending
Savings books.

The Face Behind the Face also has its unhappy quota of feeble and embarrassing work; and yet the familiar, lyrical Yevtushenko is at his sharpest and best in new poems like "Somewhere Above the Victim", "A Father's Ear" and "Alder Catkin." He would seem to have been served plainly and well by his translators, despite an occasional predilection (as in "like after illness") for mid-Atlantic grammar.

TERENCE TILLER'S *That Singing Mesh*,[3] a long-cogitated (and, sadly, resolutely final) new volume of love poems by this most hesitant and arcane of writers, is by any standards an impressive and remarkable book. Tiller is very conscious of the Empsonian influence that has gone into the structuring of these poems—which seem far more

[3] *That Singing Mesh.* By TERENCE TILLER. Chatto/Hogarth, £3.

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plotted, intricate and opaque than earlier work (*Unarm, Eros,* for example) now long and regrettably out of print. But what saves them from utter opacity (apart from some Notes which are more helpful than most notes provided by "difficult" poets) is a sensuous quality which owes rather more to Graves—

my own ship,
wind-racked and wary, hovers off the shore
of your enshrouded island; hand and lip
know little of that Eden, guess the more;
"Terra Incognita"

—and to metaphysical founding fathers like Donne, than to William Empson whose own brand of intriguing weirdness is absent, for example, from Tiller's villanelles:

To snatch reluctant wings is baby greed
(lust is a foundry that unfuses brass):
the most of pain is greater than its need.
"Need-fires"

I do not understand the last line there, in or out of its contexts, and I suspect that a successful use of ambiguity depends on a sub-stratum of absolute precision, somewhere below all the layers of meaning.

In certain of the poems the ingenuity seems to disperse in vagueness; and without discernible stories and situations (which the poet eschews, or conceals) the going becomes hard. Yet where the tight structure and the elaborate conceit support and assist each other, the effect can be ravishing; as in "In Absentia", where the mistress is the sun shining through the "lens" of her lover; or in "Reading a Score", which could easily rest its case on these two stanzas, but continues for two more and draws the whole argument into a triumphant musical analogy:

They who by February mist, by March
blue-gashing in the cold, new-nippled boughs,
loved under day or under the dark brows
of sheetless night; poised their brief-straining arch
at Now or Maybe-never: by Easter grace
awhile were given time, and Time, and place.

Closed on each other's flesh as flowers close
upon themselves, how should they sense or care
when the black moth their paraclete spread there
a sparked eclipse of wings on thorn and rose?
Fires have more colour, overshaded; peace
more purity when song and cradle cease.

P. J. KAVANAGH'S earlier verse was full of good ideas handled awkwardly, a tendency to present his best thoughts in a garrulous and eccentric form. In *Life Before Death*,[4] he is still trying to get away with openings like

If this is heaven I have the pain of a God that's in it,
Powerless, grieving down at the vanishing minute.
"While the Sun Shines"

but the general effect is one of a greatly increased economy of means and precision of observation. The shorter poem suits him better than the ambitiously larger structure, and he has learnt much from the example of the poet featuring in the title of his last book, *Edward Thomas in Heaven.* There is a new, very real skill in catching the shape of untidy yet haunting moments: the minute when war memories suddenly and alarmingly intrude on a conversation with a six year-old son; the day when, absurdly, he could have offered the ageing Ezra Pound a pizza, and didn't; the hour watching workmen replace ruined limestone walls with ordinary fences:

Foxes' navigation, weasels' run,
Skilful catchers of every light, they open
Like graves, a jumble of yellow bone
That tractors tidy away. Visitors from the town
May vaguely remark an absence, travel on.

The thud, thud, is fence-posts going in.

[4] *Life Before Death.* By P. J. KAVANAGH. Chatto/Hogarth, £3.

Alarm and Hope
Andrei Sakharov
Nuclear physicist, Nobel Peace Prize winner and leading Russian dissident, Sakharov makes a moving appeal for human rights, disarmament and détente.
'Let us hope we can live up to the expectations of this great and good man' Antony Polonsky, NEW STATESMAN
£5.50 COLLINS/HARVILL

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There are offbeat looks at an odd-job hunter and a museum keeper, and some scary investigations of some ancestors (including a limbless ex-MP who died on the Nile in 1889). Not all, but a good many, of the poems in *Life Before Death* suggest that he is ironing out the prolixity and the technical clumsiness, and saying it directly and observantly as he really wants to. "Illness" has its clear echo of Thomas; but Kavanagh develops something of his own:

At times it is good to be cold and ill and small
As things that in a bare world have no rest
From owl and weasel, in a cold world no nest:
For one foot lifted to be a victory, a smile
Or word an imitation word, a smile remembered
From days before the silences began
To ring and ripple and enclose us, settle down
As moss settles and closes round a stone.

U. A. FANTHORPE'S first collection[5] is pleasantly offered in an agreeable format from Peterloo Poets (who also offer, in *Peterloo Anthology 1*,[6] trailers for an ambitious set of books, many of them first volumes, which are due to appear in the coming months). *Side Effects* is partly just that: the poems that have accrued in lunch hours and other snatched moments during Miss Fanthorpe's working day as a hospital clerk. Poetry about occupations (Geoffrey Holloway's uneven and over-long, yet occasionally impressive *All I Can Say*,[7] drawing on social work experience, is another recent example) is now filling the gap left by the dying out of the last war service poetry of 1939–45. But what makes *Side Effects* a distinctly promising first book is a detached, observer's eye which can reshuffle experience of this life in a manner which is at once compassionate and disconcerting; and there is already a considerable technical maturity. If the case-history poems, though beautifully done, are somehow *expected,* Miss Fanthorpe's slant on the yachting "Specialist" with the fog-horn voice is not:

His heart is in
His dinghy, where he can be cock
Of the whole thwart, no space there for
Subordinates.

I am ashamed
To be annoyed by his brutal
Rejection of delicacy
When he

Pours out so much
Of his ichor, modulates so
Touchingly his loud-hailer, for
His land-sick patients.

"After Visiting Hours" adds its own extra dimension to the world of that most famous and moving of all modern hospital poems, Philip Larkin's "The Building"; I haven't seen this idea treated elsewhere. And there is a nice line in baroque fantasy, or allegory, in "My Brother's House" and "Family Entertainment." This is a varied, as well as a skilful and accomplished talent, and I look forward to more of these scathing or tender poems; "earthed", as she has it, in a poem with that title, in an English landscape which she invests with a very individual freshness and oddity, full of

supermarkets
Where the cashiers' rudeness is native
To the district, though the bread's not, or
gardens,
Loved more than children,

Bright with resourcefulness and smelling
Of rain.

GAVIN EWART'S *All My Little Ones*[8] (an inspired title) comes with Miss Twye in her bath on the dust jacket, and an instruction from the author not to read all these "little thoughts (often sexual) that pass through everybody's mind", at one sitting. This is reasonable advice, but Ewart's bittocks (which I offer as a title for any further collection of small pieces like this) stand up to the test very well. Of course, with respect, these are *not* everybody's thoughts; they are highly characteristic distillations of Ewartesque impropriety and ingenuity. They are mostly very funny, though not all are: among the sordid limericks and scandalous *haiku* will be found the occasional serious note which brings the reader up with a jolt. And they are sometimes wickedly perceptive. Together on one finely-spaced page we find not only a fairly mild topical *jeu d'esprit* like "Invasion":

Is it not passing brave to be a King
and charge in arabhood through Selfridges?

but also "Patronage":

With a wry smile they wheeled out the inflatables
to inspire a community sense in the dogshit
streets.

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[5] *Side Effects*. By U. A. FANTHORPE. Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets, £1.95.
[6] *Peterloo Anthology 1*. Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets, £3.
[7] *All I Can Say*. By GEOFFREY HOLLOWAY. Anvil, £2.50.
[8] *All My Little Ones*. By GAVIN EWART. Anvil, £3.50.

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John Gohorry

The Exquisite Box

As a girl she once lifted the lid
of the exquisite box. There flew out
a torrent of beautiful dreams, and
one dark thing she never knew about

until one bright day in the garden
a silence fell suddenly. The birds
halted expectantly, still as death;
the laburnum tree hunted for words.

Everything breathed again easily.
But then, on her wedding day, her dress
bore a curdling black blot—from it sprang
terrible shapes she could not suppress.

Her groom wore an octopus face, and
on each hand a ring with a jet stone.
The guests chimed like overwound clocks. She
searched for a plausible face, her own.

Kind hospital porters, kind nurses
now steer her away from the black rocks
where she broke mirrors, slashed at her wrists.
And walked into the exquisite box.

Michael Hulse

Demolition of the Mental Home

End: three walls down, the garden churned up, dust.
One lived here once who believed he daily
breathed Adolf Hitler in and out eighty
times and that because of this he was lost.

End: planks for barrows over muddy ground,
piles of splintered wood. Martha, who never
walked alone, walked these paths alone: Martha,
who lived a long too-muchness in her mind.

So often the windows have thus blindly
returned the stares of blanker eyes than ours.
So often the door has crashed open: end.

The asters are trampled, but the ivy
still fingers the final wall. Listless fires
burn by the door of the summerhouse: end.

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Of Valuable Oil & Worthless Policies

By J. B. Kelly

THERE HAS BEEN a great squawking and flapping of wings of late in the capitals of the West as the chickens from the Middle East have come home to roost. Not only has the noise been heard in the halls of the Pentagon and the State Department and along the corridors of impotence in Whitehall but it has also disturbed the tranquillity of the academies and think-tanks and other *ateliers* of informed opinion. For the convulsion which swept away Muhammad Reza Shah and the apparatus of orderly government in Iran in the winter of 1978–79 also exposed the rickety foundations upon which Western policy in the Gulf region had rested throughout the present decade, a policy which was initially fashioned from illusion and has been sustained ever since by deceit.

When the government of Harold Wilson announced in January 1968, two months after abandoning Aden and South Arabia to the crypto-Marxist National Liberation Front, that it intended also to withdraw from the Gulf by the end of 1971, the shadow foreign secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home, condemned the decision in the House of Commons as "a dereliction of stewardship, the like of which this country has not seen in the conduct of foreign policy before." Three years later, as foreign secretary in Edward Heath's administration, he implemented the decision. No provision was made at the time for the future protection of British and Western interests in the region beyond the grant of limited assistance to the Sultan of Oman in defeating the guerrilla insurgency in his southern province of Dhufar, an insurgency which had only assumed dangerous proportions after the British abandonment of Aden at the end of 1967.

After 150 years of keeping the peace of the Gulf Britain had walked (or rather sidled) out. Her departure represented a triumph for that school of thought which, ever since the defeat at Suez fifteen years earlier, had held that there was no call any longer for "a British presence" anywhere in the Middle East. For the United States, which had tried—rather late in the day—to prevail upon Britain to reconsider the decision to leave the Gulf, the British withdrawal posed a twofold problem. There could be no question of the United States actively assuming the role that Britain had relinquished; for the national neurosis induced by the war in Viet Nam had already begun the slow paralysis of American foreign policy which has today almost reached a terminal stage. On the other hand, an area as intrinsically unstable as the Gulf, containing half the known oil reserves in the world, could not simply be left without any form of regional security, especially as there were other outside powers inimical to the West, the Soviet Union in particular, who would welcome the opportunity now granted them to intervene, in one guise or another, in the Gulf's affairs. Confronted with this dilemma, the United States sought an easy solution—and found it in the expedient of building up Saudi Arabia and Iran, the twin pillars, as guardians of the Gulf.

THE BASIC FLAW in this arrangement was that these two states had been the principal troublemakers in the Gulf for a good century-and-a-half, and they showed no signs of changing their spots. Ever since the close of the 18th century the House of Saud had been trying to extend its sway over the entire Arabian peninsula, desisting only when internecine quarrels or the intrusive activities of its neighbours periodically distracted it. By the early 1930s King Abdul Aziz ibn Saud (the father of the present ruler) had conquered the bulk of the peninsula, the further extension of his power being blocked by Britain's treaty relationship with the petty states of the Arabian littoral of the Gulf, as well as by her protectorate over South Arabia and her longstanding friendship with Oman. The discovery of oil in Hasa, the eastern province of Saudi Arabia, did not abate Ibn Saud's appetite for fresh territory. On the contrary, beginning in 1934, he advanced large claims to the Rub al-Khali, the "Empty Quarter" and parts of Oman and Abu Dhabi, on the assumption (which time was to prove correct) that they also might contain oil deposits. His sons and successors persisted with the claims

J. B. KELLY *is a historian specialising in British relations with the Middle East. His books include "Eastern Arabian Frontiers" (1964) and "Britain and the Persian Gulf 1795–1880" (1968); he has just completed a study of "Arabia, the Gulf and the West."*

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after his death in 1953, resorting to a fair number of dubious tactics in an effort to enforce them—including gun-running, bribery, attempted assassination, subversion in Oman and encouragement for a tribal rebellion in Dhufar. An eventual accommodation was reached in 1974–75—in so far as anything can be said to be settled in the flux and reflux of Arabian politics—when some substantial pieces of Oman and Abu Dhabi, one of them containing a large oilfield, were made over to Faisal ibn Abdul Aziz as the price of his recognition of the newly-formed "United Arab Emirates."

IRAN, like the Saudi amirate of Najd, had resisted nearly every effort by Britain in the 19th and 20th centuries to civilise the Gulf and bring it under the rule of law, whether by the suppression of piracy and maritime warfare, the outlawing of the slave trade, the curbing of the arms traffic, the charting of the Gulf's waters, the laying of the telegraph or the establishment of quarantine stations and regulations. This policy of obstruction was accompanied by, indeed, largely arose from, an almost pathological addiction on the part of Persian governments to the assertion of large and insubstantial claims to dominion over much of the Gulf region—to the Shatt al-Arab and parts of Kuwait, to Bahrain and other islands in the Gulf, to tracts of Seistan, Makran and Baluchistan, and to western areas of Afghanistan. In part these claims were occasioned by a desire to compensate for territory lost to Russia in the Caucasus and beyond the Caspian, and as such they were often encouraged by the Russians. They also sprang, however, from a conviction (similar to that held by the Al Saud of Najd) that wherever in the world an Iranian foot had once trod that spot remained thereafter irrevocably and eternally Iranian.

Illusions of grandeur and an obsessive preoccupation with what were held to be Iran's sovereign rights in the Gulf region also dominated the thinking of Muhammad Reza Shah. His modest ambition was to bestride Western Asia like a Colossus, to recreate the empire of Darius and to make Iran, within the space of one or two decades, into the second industrial nation in Asia after Japan.

Casting about him for ways in which to impress his neighbours and the world outside with his puissance and majesty, he tore up in 1969 the treaty with Iraq governing the maritime régime in the Shatt al-Arab, gave conspicuous aid to the Kurds in their revolt against the government of Baghdad, seized the islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs on the eve of Britain's withdrawal from the Gulf, with the intention of controlling the Straits of Hormuz, and a couple of years later sent troops to Dhufar to help suppress the insurgency there.

The benefit to the West of these various actions was highly questionable. His quarrel with Iraq and the seizure of Abu Musa and the Tunbs led to the conclusion of the Soviet-Iraqi treaty of April 1972 and to Colonel Qaddafi's expropriation of British Petroleum's concession and assets in Libya. The contribution of Iranian arms to the defeat of the insurgency in Dhufar was hardly decisive, while at the same time it caused ripples of apprehension along the Arabian shore of the Gulf. As for the Kurds, the Shah unceremoniously abandoned them in the spring of 1975 in order to improve his relations with the Baathist junta in Baghdad.

WHILE ALL THIS WAS GOING ON, the United States, having promulgated the theory of the "twin pillars", had been trying to invest the conceit with substance.

In May 1972 President Nixon and his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, stopped in Tehran on their way back from disarmament talks in Moscow. They gave the Shah assurances of virtually unhampered access to America's arsenal, without having to run the gauntlet of the normal scrutiny accorded arms requests by the Departments of State and Defence. It was an unprecedented act of policy by a US administration towards a non-Western power, for it allowed the Shah to purchase advanced weapons of a kind whose export had hitherto been restricted to NATO countries. What Nixon and Kissinger did not foresee was the huge increase in Iran's oil revenues following the quadrupling of oil prices by OPEC late in 1973, an increase which enabled the Shah to indulge to the point of satiety his passion for the deadly trinkets of war.

Much the same kind of *carte blanche* was subsequently given to Saudi Arabia, and for the same inadequately considered strategic reasons. The policy was given an added impetus, as well as a meretricious economic justification, by the oil-price rises of 1973–74, the accepted wisdom of the day being that the money paid out for oil could be "recouped" by selling the Arabs and Iranians vast quantities of arms and other expensive gewgaws. Much rubbing of hands and greasing of palms ensued on both sides of the Atlantic as Britain, France, and the United States set out to array the Saudi and Iranian armies like Caesar's legions. In so doing, as the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations discovered in 1976 in its investigations into the Lockheed and Grumman scandals, they managed to plumb some exceedingly murky depths.

To sell the "twin-pillar" policy to the Congress, some members of which in both the House and the Senate were inclined to question its practicability, the State Department conducted a tireless

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campaign to depict Saudi Arabia and Iran as dependable allies of the United States: dynamic, stable, forward-looking, economically progressive, and militarily strong, or at least potentially so. It was an undertaking which called for a fair degree of ingenuity and considerable powers of imagination; but the State Department, with some assistance from the Pentagon, was equal to the task. From 1971 onwards, in appearances before Congressional committees concerned with foreign affairs, witnesses from the State Department built up a picture of the Shah as an enlightened despot (the particular phrase was not actually used, being considered perhaps a little inapt to the purpose at hand), anxious to regenerate his country, to modernise its economy, educate its people, and defend them against their enemies. More than this, however, it was earnestly asserted, the Shah was capable of being entrusted with the care of Western interests in the Gulf and its surrounding seas, since there was a close and even irresistible identity of interests between Iran and the United States.

Thus Philip C. Habib (under-secretary for political affairs at the State Department) told a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September 1976 that the United States and Iran "have generally seen our respective interests as parallel, at times congruent, and we share many objectives." He was, he explained, only reflecting the views of his chief, Kissinger, who more than once had stated that the policies of the United States and Iranian governments "have been parallel and therefore mutually reinforcing", and that cooperation between the two "grew out of a leadership that is clearly independent, that pursues its conception of its own national interest based on a history of 2,500 years of Iranian policy. . . ." (The most charitable comment one can make upon this syntactic bizarrerie is that Kissinger was not a close student of Iranian history.) Habib's statements were made in the context of the proposed sale of yet more advanced aircraft to Iran—160 F-16s at a cost of $3,800 million—a subject which was at that moment also engaging the attention of Senator Frank Church's sub-committee on multinational corporations. Though the Church subcommittee hearings were uncovering the existence of some fairly *louche* transactions between American aircraft and armaments manufacturers and the Shah's government, the State Department

The US Failure

IN 1969 Henry Kissinger, soon after moving into the White House as Richard Nixon's National Security Adviser, ordered a policy study of how the vacuum left by the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf should be filled. Rejecting a direct American role, Nixon opted for "regional cooperation", based on the twin pillars of Iran and Saudi Arabia. At this stage, the internal stability of the Shah's regime was taken for granted. "The whole assumption was that the Shah was well entrenched and that there was no foreseeable threat to that stability", recalls one of those actively taking part in the creation of the policy. "I feel that I was equally as guilty, and that Mr. Kissinger and the previous Administrations were equally as guilty and oblivious as the Carter people." To date, such candid contrition is not shared by all the architects of the policy.

FROM *a relatively modest level of $113 million in fiscal year 1970, US military sales to Iran had climbed to $2.1 billion by 1973. How his military ambitions affected the Shah's demand for higher oil prices is a matter for conjecture. What is clear is that the quadrupling of oil revenues gave him the means to pursue these ambitions to the hilt.*

The rationale for these vast shipments of sophisticated weaponry—some $12 billion in orders were in the pipeline when the Shah was overthrown—was the hollow argument that they would contribute to regional stability. When the crisis in Iran came, the Shah's regime had an overabundance of supersonic fighters, including seventy-eight of the advanced F-14's—but ran short of tear gas. Far from stabilizing the situation, the arms became a major source of popular unrest, arousing bitter resentment against the wasteful diversion of the country's economic resources, the corruption rampant throughout the Iranian procurement program, and the culturally jarring invasion of thousands of foreign personnel and their dependents. It is a historical irony that by enabling the Shah to pursue his grandiose ambition of surpassing West Germany by the year 2000, the oil bonanza sowed the seeds of his own destruction.

THE ADMINISTRATION **worried that critical reporting might jeopardize congressional support for the military-sales program. Despite evidence that the program was "out of control", Senate Foreign Relations Committee investigators charged in July, 1976, that "senior State Department officials appear not to have been prepared to tolerate open debate on . . . unrestricted arms sales to Iran."**

According to the staff report of the House Intelligence Committee of January 24, "No CIA intelligence reporting based on sources within the religious opposition occurred during a two-year period ending in November, 1977." Also: "there was absolutely no reporting on the internal situation based on sources within the opposition party during the first quarter of 1978." Despite the prophetic-sounding title of "Iran After the Shah", a twenty-three-page intelligence Assessment published in August, 1978, flatly stated in its preface that "Iran is not in a revolutionary, or even in a 'prerevolutionary' situa-

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did not appear in the least disconcerted by them. Nor did it—nor did anyone else, for that matter—profess the slightest unease at the possibility that the Shah's profligate expenditure upon arms might be bankrupting Iran, to the eventual detriment of his own position and his function as America's northern sentinel of the Gulf.

MUCH THE SAME KIND of creative licence, with appropriate adjustments, was used in depicting the strength and importance of Saudi Arabia. Here, instead of a contemporary Xerxes and the burgeoning "second industrial power in Asia", we had the Badu Kingdom, ruled over by the stern yet benevolent House of Saud, supported by and themselves upholding the austere verities of the Wahhabi practice of Islam. Borrowing heavily from the propaganda circulated in the United States for many years by the Arabian-American Oil Company, the State Department in successive hearings before the Congressional committees spun a tale about the Saudi ruling house, its rise to power, its mode of government, and its conduct towards its neighbours that the ghost of Scheherazade could not have bettered. At the heart of the State Department's presentation lay the argument—first propounded and assiduously propagated for many years afterwards by ARAMCO for its own obvious purposes—that a natural affinity existed between Americans and Saudi Arabs, a sense of immediate camaraderie that made them logical allies. To give this notion of a mutuality of interests and outlook between the citizens of the world's most advanced democracy and the inhabitants of one of the world's most unenlightened states a little more credibility, ARAMCO in its publications had employed a terminology deliberately evocative of the American West in pioneer days, of Badu homesteaders, of grazing ranges (*diyar* in Arabic), of the Saudis as Unitarians (*muwahiddun*, "believers in the unity of God"), of manifest destiny—in short, of Arabia as America's last frontier. The State Department adopted the same practice, while updating the imagery to that of Pittsburgh and Houston arising by the Red Sea, of a grand economic Saudi-American partnership, with the Saudis supplying the oil and finance and the Americans technology, arms and political guarantees.

To some extent the State Department was aided in its endeavours to portray Saudi Arabia as a rapidly evolving, modern kingdom by the gullibility of some Senators and Congressmen.

"The notion that we are dealing in Saudi Arabia with primitive Bedouins is not only patronising but obviously mistaken", George McGovern informed his colleagues in the Senate in May 1975 after a lightning visit to that country. As one American Embassy official had put it to him, "What you are dealing with here is a government run by 3,000 American university graduates. . . ." Further testimony to the efficiency of the Saudi government—its constructive use of its oil revenues, its benign outlook upon its smaller neighbours in the Gulf, its reliability as an ally of the United States, and its solicitude for the economic health of the West, as evidenced by its moderating influence in the counsels of OPEC—was liberally provided by the parade of witnesses from the universities, the oil companies and other outside bodies who appeared before the Congressional committees from 1971 onwards.

It was a rare display of an even rarer unanimity of views, made all the more interesting by the fact that no Western scholar or casual inquirer was allowed to travel in Saudi Arabia to see conditions there for himself and form an independent judgment about the country.

WHERE DOES THE WEST stand today with respect to the security of its oil supplies from the Gulf—now that the great over-arching edifice of Saudi-Iranian cooperation, which the

in Iran

tion."

And yet—would better intelligence have changed U.S. policy? It seems doubtful. As a classified staff report of the House Intelligence Committee commented in August 1978, "History provides ample illustration to suggest the futility of warning if decision-makers are unwilling to accept a warning or are unprepared to deal with the terms in which the warning comes."

THERE FINALLY ARISES *the question critical to the global balance of power: if the U.S. cannot simply proclaim its pure political abstinence from the turmoil of such an arena, how* should *it make its concerned* presence *effectively known and felt? In 1968, the Soviet Union dealt with a popular threat to its stake in Czechoslovakia in its own way. But this is a way wholly incompatible with the U.S.'s declared values and principles. What are the legitimate and effective ways for the U.S. to safeguard vital interests in countries threatened by such social pressures and political disorders? Can these ways be reconciled with any understood code of conduct restraining any major power from merely exploiting and manipulating countries in ferment? And without some such agreed constraint, can detente prove workable?*

THESE ARE SOME **lasting questions posed by the unhappy events in Iran. They thrust far beyond the dilemmas of the immediate present or the frontiers of that country. And if we can grasp some realistic answers to them, we may somewhere else save what we could not guard there.**

Herman Nickel

in FORTUNE Magazine (*New York*)

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United States, Ozymandias-like, had decreed should dominate the Gulf, has turned out to be a sham? . . . "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone/Stand in the desert."

Strategic control over Middle-Eastern sources of oil was deemed essential by the major Western powers until recent years. Britain had exercised such control through the British government's shareholding in British Petroleum, through British management of the Iraq Petroleum Company, and through her political and military presence in the Gulf. France, which had a minority shareholding in the Iranian consortium, in IPC and in operations in the lower Gulf shaikhdoms, tried in the 1960s to ensure security of supply by means of her "special relationship" with Algeria, an attempt which ended in failure in 1971. The United States after the Second World War entrusted the protection of her strategic interest in Middle-Eastern oil to the major American oil companies operating in the Middle East, which meant, in effect, turning the responsibility over to ARAMCO and its parent companies.

During the 1960s the argument developed and took hold that *physical control* of Middle-Eastern oil, as exercised by the oil companies' concessionary rights and the British presence in the Gulf, was no longer necessary, indeed, was positively detrimental in its effects. The irresistible strength of Afro-Asian Nationalism, the shifting balance of power in the world, the passing of the imperial age and all the other familiar excuses with which the West has cloaked its descent into lethargy were invoked in support of the argument. The supply of oil, like its price—so it was contended—was purely a commercial question, a matter of supply-and-demand, and to be treated as such. The reigning consensus of opinion was summed up by the fashionable adage, "The Arabs can't drink their oil." As we have come to learn, however, they, and the Iranians, are not averse to attempting the feat.

Neither the creeping nationalisation of the oil companies (under the disingenuous label of "participation") nor the oil embargo and the huge price increases of the autumn of 1973 had much effect in casting doubt upon the validity of the dogma. A few cosmetic adjustments were made and the dogma re-emerged in the guise of "recycling", a magical process by which the vast sums paid out for oil would be recovered both by the sale of equally vast quantities of industrial goods and arms and by luring the Arabs into investing their financial surpluses in the West. What few paused to consider, or if they did, resignedly rejected as impracticable, was whether it would not be wiser to press for a reduction of oil prices. After all, if for any reason the contracts for arms and other Western manufactures were to be cancelled, the West would still be compelled to pay excessive prices for oil without being able to offset them by the sale of Chieftain Tanks and F-16s.

THE BATTLE AGAINST higher oil prices, however, was lost almost as soon as it began in the early summer of 1970, when Colonel Muammar Qaddafi unilaterally raised the price of Libyan oil under the threat of shutting down production by the Western oil companies operating in Libya. Despite efforts by the major American and British oil companies to impress upon the US government the consequences of allowing Qaddafi to succeed with his extortion, the State Department refused to stand up to him. When the rest of OPEC emulated the Libyan leader's tactics and threatened the oil companies with an embargo unless their demands for increased prices were also met, the State Department, after initially assisting to make a combined negotiation by the companies legally permissible under US anti-trust legislation, then proceeded to sabotage the subsequent negotiations with OPEC at Tehran in January 1971 by withdrawing its support when the going got rough.

From that moment onward the struggle with OPEC was lost. Henceforth oil prices were progressively to be fixed, not by negotiation as in normal mercantile transactions (*pace* the exponents of treating oil like any other commercial commodity) but by OPEC fiat. The unedifying display of pusillanimity and *sauve qui peut* which constituted Western Europe's reaction, and in particular that of Britain and France, to the Arab oil embargo of 1973 only confirmed the Middle-Eastern members of OPEC in their contempt for the Western powers. It is little wonder that, with allies like these, the Americans turned in the summer of 1974 to making their own arrangements to safeguard their oil interests in the Arabian peninsula by entering into a comprehensive agreement with Saudi Arabia for the provision of arms, military training, and assistance with economic development in return for guaranteed oil supplies and promises of Saudi financial investment in the USA. The agreement amounted, in sum, to an American undertaking to preserve the integrity of Saudi Arabia and the primacy of the Al Saud within it.

HOWEVER ADVANTAGEOUS or disadvantageous this arrangement may prove to be for the United States, it does little to safeguard the vital interests of Western Europe and Japan in the Gulf. In the final analysis, the United States can do without Middle-Eastern oil. Western Europe and Japan cannot. Moreover, it would be unwise as well as politically undesirable for them to place the entire responsibility for the defence of Western interests in the Gulf upon American shoulders alone. That the

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Americans are at present alone in bearing this responsibility is largely a consequence of their own actions and policy since the Second World War in striving to eradicate British and French influence from the Middle East. The attitude adopted by the State Department towards the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (BP) in 1951—which in many ways can be regarded as the starting point of the gradual loss of Western strategic control over Middle Eastern oil—was equivocal, to say the least. Subsequently the State Department pushed the major American oil companies into participating in the Iranian consortium as a means of underwriting Iran. By failing to curb the Shah in the early 1970s, when he was leading the OPEC pack in its hunt for higher oil prices, the State Department simply fed his megalomania and paved the way not only for his downfall but also for the eventual extinction of the Western oil companies' rights in Iran.

Across the Gulf in Saudi Arabia, where the State Department had effectively resigned the making and conduct of American policy into the hands of ARAMCO, it had watched with placid indulgence the efforts of the Al Saud from the late 1940s onwards to subvert the authority of the legitimate rulers of Oman and Abu Dhabi within their own borders with the object of annexing their ancestral territories along with any oil deposits that might lie beneath them. The British persisted in their determination to uphold the independence of Oman and Abu Dhabi against Ibn Saud and his successors. So ARAMCO set itself the task, which it accomplished without undue effort, of persuading the State Department that the ending of the British connection with the Gulf would not only benefit American oil interests in Arabia but was also a desirable end in itself, as eliminating an anachronistic remnant of Imperialism and thereby improving American relations with Saudi Arabia and the Arab world at large. *Tempus edax rerum.* When the implications of the Harold Wilson government's decision of January 1968 finally sank in, the State Department began to experience some slight misgivings. By then it was too late. The British had lost their spirit and were packing their bags. The State Department had to make the best of a situation it had had more than a hand in creating.

It did so by conjuring up the "twin-pillar" conceit and by pretending that the Gulf, with each passing year, was becoming more and more like Chesapeake Bay.

IT IS ALMOST REDUNDANT to say that it is not. Beneath the veneer of modernity it is as turbulent and unpredictable as ever, and the same tinder that started the conflagration in Iran is present in some measure in all the principalities along the Arabian shore.

The vast riches which have flowed into the Gulf in this decade have generated prodigality and corruption on a comparable scale. The native tribesman, now that the age of abundance has arrived, will no longer soil his hands with toil; so the heavy manual work of building the contemporary Xanadus arising along the Gulf coast is done by Iranian, Baluchi and Pakistani labourers in their thousands (and in Saudi Arabia by hundreds of thousands of Yemenis), while the skilled tasks are performed by Europeans ("white coolies") and Arab émigrés (most of whom are Palestinians).

Well over half the population of Kuwait is made up of immigrants. It is the same in Qatar. In the United Arab Emirates immigrants outnumber the indigenous inhabitants two or perhaps three times over.

Yet the bulk of the oil wealth is reserved for the native Arab population, distributed to them in the form of public services, housing, welfare benefits and cash allowances, all of which are designed to ensure their continuing allegiance to their rulers. For the mass of the immigrant population there are no such benefits. The resultant discontent, aggravated by the mindless extravagance all about them, affords a potentially fertile breeding ground for political agitation.

Radical political notions, of Marxist, Baathist or other provenance, have been circulating in the Gulf states for some years now. This has been particularly so among sections of the Palestine community and among the native *jeunesse dorée* of Kuwait and Bahrain. They have dabbled in the shallows of revolutionary politics in much the same way as their counterparts in the West have done, and for similar reasons of satiety and boredom. Whether they will ever translate the hotchpotch of ideas which excite them into political action is a moot question. They are also influenced by the current mood of Muslim revivalism which is so pronounced around the shores of the Gulf and which has expressed itself in Iran in a virulent outbreak of anti-Western sentiment.

Over and above the problems of internal security which exist in the Gulf states, the states themselves are divided by long-standing and vexatious antagonisms arising from dynastic rivalries, tribal vendettas, sectarian antipathies, territorial disputes and other historical causes. They have rarely, if ever, been able to sink their differences for any length of time in order to confront a common danger; and there is no sign of their successfully doing so today. On the contrary, they are as ready as ever they were to settle their differences by the sword.

Should any one of the numerous irritations which bedevil relations among Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the minor Gulf states erupt into open conflict, the entire oil industry of the Gulf, thanks

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to the indiscriminate arming of most of these states by the West with the fearsome weapons of modern war, could be put at deadly risk.

WHY THE STATE DEPARTMENT has persisted in playing Pollyanna over the Gulf defies understanding. It may be simply incomprehension on its part, or conscious self-deception, or it may also be deliberate misrepresentation for some obscure purpose. Henry Kissinger, in an interview published in *The Economist* (10 February), excused the failure of American policy in Iran, a policy of which he had himself been an author, by saying that

> "all of us paid insufficient attention in Iran to the proposition that political construction should go side by side with economic construction. The failure was less of intelligence agencies than of a conceptual apparatus."

But could it not also have been due to a lack of understanding of Iranian society and history, an insufficient appreciation of the force of Shii Islam in Persian life, and a refusal to see where the Shah's profligate expenditure upon arms was leading?

A staff report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the summer of 1976, for instance, described the arms programme as running out of control, the Iranian armed forces (the Air Force in particular) as being incapable of absorbing the complicated weaponry with which they were being inundated, and the State Department as being uninformed as well as unconcerned about the whole affair. Yet when questioned about the report in September 1976, the State Department's spokesman assured the committee that the arms programme, around which American-Iranian relations revolved, was going swimmingly.

THE SAME HEEDLESS and badly thought-out policy has been pursued, and is still being pursued, with respect to the arming of Saudi Arabia. Here, again, huge quantities of advanced weapons are being poured into a country whose armed forces are even more ill-equipped to handle them than were the Iranians. Nor is it entirely clear that the Saudi budget, despite all the common assumptions to the contrary, is capable of sustaining the expense involved in their purchase. The United States is even more deeply committed to Saudi Arabia than she was to Iran. If the need for American intervention should arise—to safeguard American oil interests or to defend the ruling house against its enemies from within or without, the United States will be faced with a series of acute dilemmas. Intervention will have been made domestically difficult because of conflicting statements on the subject made by members of President Carter's administration and the hostility to the idea expressed at various times by leading Democratic senators. Intervention would be hazardous in a Middle-Eastern context because of the religious as well as the political antipathy it would arouse. Nor, in the form one would normally expect it to take in military terms, would it necessarily prove effective, at least so far as the preservation of the integrity of Saudi Arabia and the rule of the Al Saud were concerned. A military occupation of the Hasa oilfields might well send reverberations across the peninsula which would surface in insurrection in the Hijaz—and no Western troops could be dispatched to the Holy Places of Islam to suppress it.

WHAT HAS TO BE WEIGHED, in the final assessment, is the importance of the Gulf's oil to the West against the dangers which would attend any positive move to assure strategic control over it.

Every passing year since the start of this decade has revealed more clearly the folly of depending for continued access to the region's oil reserves upon the goodwill, capacity and sense of responsibility of the wilful and capricious régimes that rule the Gulf. Every year, too, has seen the dangers to the region's security multiply, whether from the rarely glimpsed but nevertheless active seditious elements within the Gulf states or from the steady encirclement of the area by the Soviet Union and its clients.

The Russians are now established in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Ethiopia. Down in the south-western corner of Arabia they sit entrenched in the former British base at Aden, along with their Cuban and East-German auxiliaries, ready to direct them and their South Yemeni vassals eastwards into Dhufar or northwards into the Yemen. Their need for oil, for themselves and their East European satellites, is growing; and they cannot afford to pay for it in hard currency or acceptable manufactures. The temptation to take by subversion what they cannot afford to purchase will surely grow at a commensurate pace. They have learned the lessons of sea-power, which the West is in danger of forgetting, and they recognise the truth (which the Western powers flinch from acknowledging) of Macaulay's dictum—"that the essence of war is violence, and that moderation in war is imbecility." Those flapping wings and harsh cries we hear around us may not be chickens, after all, but birds of more sinister and predatory aspect.

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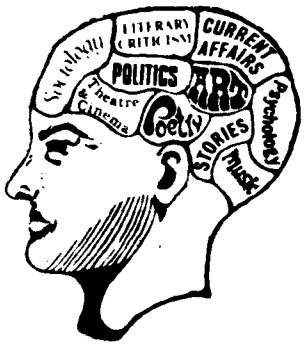
Democracy without Tears (but much Rhetoric)

By John O'Sullivan



IT USED TO BE the proud boast of Peter Simple, resident satirist on London's *Daily Telegraph*, that he had correctly forecast the result of every Portuguese election during Dr Salazar's forty years of power. He was relying, moreover, he would point out, not on elaborate surveys of public opinion, nor on statistical breakdowns of regional voting patterns, but just on good, plain, old-fashioned hunch.

Alas for Peter Simple's peace of mind, the world is rapidly placing itself beyond the reach of satire. Its everyday activities far exceed the wildest ironies that the satirist can invent. In particular, the international community (and there's a phrase that should ring a carillon of warning bells) contains innumerable states, perhaps a majority, which passionately claim the status of democracy but in which, somehow or other, the rascals never get thrown out. Unlike Dr Salazar, moreover, the rulers of these societies feel less and less moral inferiority in the company of 24-carat Western democrats. When, therefore, the official French radio station, *France Culture*, decided to hold a symposium on "The Future of Democracy", two things were certain: that it would be held in Athens, and that the representatives of democracy without surprises would dominate the occasion.

There were, of course, a few orthodox democrats scattered around to show that *France Culture* was prepared to hear all sides—Herman Kahn, Professor Arthur Schlesinger jr, and Premier Mario Soares of Portugal. But the all-important *tone* was set by what Bernard Nossiter in the *Washington Post* called "sentimental leftists, Gaullists and communists." (Gaullists are a special case, being democrats who, for understandable historical reasons, have a pronounced affection for authoritarian styles of ruling.) Among those present, as the *Tatler and Bystander* might put it, were Signor Lucio Libertini of the Italian Communist Party; ex-President Luis Eccheverria of one-party Mexico; Mohammed Heikal of Egypt; Vladimir Becaric of Yugoslavia; Premier Hedi Nouira of one-party Tunisia; and many others. As the upper-class English Army officer said when asked what conditions had been like at the battle of Dunkirk: "My dear, the noise, the *people*!"

UNDER SUCH DISTINGUISHED scrutiny, democracy naturally turned out to be terribly complicated, even mystifying. Does the reader of these pages perhaps imagine that it is a relatively simple matter of competitive parties, regular elections, universal suffrage and civil rights? Well, according to Signor Libertini—a Euro-Communist in the current mode—these fulfil only half the requirements. "*Complete democracy*" would consist both of parliamentary pluralism and civil rights as above *and* of "socialistic economics" as well. This is a very useful formulation from a Euro-Communist viewpoint because it establishes by definition what is already believed in European Left circles—namely, that the West and the Soviets are equally undemocratic, though in different ways. *They* shove people into psychiatric wards for demanding free elections—and *we* allow multi-national corporations to manipulate consumers by foisting on them a pointless alienating choice between Mcdonalds and Burger-King, Republicans and Democrats. Doubters are referred to Marcuse who refers them to Hegel.

Signor Libertini's formulation, though it conveniently disposes of the West's claim to democracy, has certain internal contradictions of its own. To take the most obvious, suppose the people stubbornly vote for capitalist parties? Is the compleat democrat to suppress them in the interests of economic democracy (as a few chaps in the US Treasury making all the economic choices for 200 million other Americans is quaintly called)? Or is he to bow to the popular will and submit to the domination of the multi-nationals? But perhaps the dialectic will come up with a synthesis that

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transcends the pettifogging obstructions of formal logic.

Another argument that is used to stretch the concept of democracy into any shape you please is that of "Cultural Imperialism." If a Western observer points out that democracy should not mean a one-party state, a tamed press, and laws that the police make up as they go along, he is at once accused of suffering from cultural myopia which prevents him seeing that these are valid democratic forms in, say, Mozambique. To condemn Mozambique as undemocratic by contrasting it with Switzerland is, therefore, positively neo-colonialist.

Prime Minister Hedi Nouira of Tunisia advanced this argument at the symposium as follows:

> "Poverty is the riches of the poor, who must invent their own form of democracy, which deserves the respect of the rich, even if it doesn't meet their own self-devised standards."

It is only in politics that such nonsense is taken at all seriously, even if largely from motives of politeness. If Mr Nouira had announced that Tunisia had invented its own form of whisky, which deserved the respect of the Scotch and Bourbon industries, even if it did not meet their own self-devised standards, being a sticky-sweet liqueur made from dates, he would have been laughed out of every bar in town. But that is because drinking is far too important to be left to the politicians.

A slightly more sophisticated argument was put forward by former President Luis Echeverria of Mexico. He blamed the lack of democracy in Third World countries on the "unfair economic order" under which hegemony was exercised from outside by developed countries which exploited the Third World's raw material producers.

Let us try to unravel this nonsense. To begin with, the world market prices of primary products are not as unfavourable to producers as those exposed to UNCTAD rhetoric might imagine. Writing before the upsurge of raw material prices in the 1970s, Sir Arthur Lewis told the American Economic Association in 1964: "The terms of trade for primary as against manufactured products averaged higher in the 1950s than at any time in the preceding eighty years." And how does President Echeverria define "exploitation"? If he accepts the conventional definition that it is a price held artificially below the market price, then he must be aware that the international commodity agreements already in existence tend to maintain the price *above* market levels. Britain's Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, for instance, did so for two decades on the guarantee that, if world market prices ever shot up, Britain would then have an assured supply of sugar at the agreed price. When world prices *did* rise, however, producer countries reneged on the agreement and sold on the world market.

We might, however, for the purpose of the argument, assume that President Echeverria is correct in his analysis. The question then arises: Exactly how do the developed countries engineer the undemocratic structures in the Third World which seem, on the face of it, to be the work of local politicians, nationalist guerrillas, Marxist intellectuals and army officers? What are the nuts-and-bolts? Who, for instance, instructed President Echeverria, when, as a key official in Mexico's Ministry of the Interior, he directed the police action against student demonstrations that led to many deaths during the Olympic Games? AT&T? The United Fruit Company? The CIA perhaps, acting on behalf of Maxwell House coffee? If President Echeverria fails to produce a coherent account, we might just conclude that he is himself a bigger impediment to democracy in the Third World than all those off-the-peg villains put together.

BEFORE LEAVING the subject of the wicked rich, we might relish the ingeniously self-serving argument of Mohammed Heikal of Egypt who was naturally anxious to rebut the slur that oil-rich Arabs might now be numbered among them. Not so, said Mr Heikal, because—

> "we can't control our petro-dollars; we have to put them in your banks; we are not the masters of our money."

Where on earth does Mr Heikal imagine rich people keep their money if not in banks? Or are we now to consider the French peasant who keeps his cash in a sock under the floor-boards the very acme of financial prudence instead of pitying him as a poor sap who has never heard even of government bonds? Connoisseurs of logic and/or hypocrisy will also note that the West is alleged to be exploiting both those countries in which it invests and those countries which invest in it. Presumably it is guilty of a callous disregard of those countries with which it has no economic contacts whatsoever.

Even a sympathetic observer must have felt that the Athens debate was less than a model of clarity, intellectual rigour, skill in handling concepts so that at least they mean the same thing in the same sentence, and conformity to known facts. It seems to me to be markedly inferior in intellectual content and exactness of expression to the following non-Socratic dialogue:

> '"Blackshirts," said Henry who always seemed to know everything. "They're fascists."
>
> "What do they want?"
>
> "They want to be dictators and make everyone do what they want 'em to. An' then there's Brownshirts an'—an' Red 'uns. They're called Communists, the red 'uns."
>
> "What do *they* want?" asked William.

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"Oh, they jus' want to be the dictators, same as the others, an' make everyone do what they want 'em to. An' they all shout'n salute'n that sort of thing."'

That passage comes from my dog-eared copy of *William the Conqueror*, one of the famous "*Just William*" books, and was designed not to enlighten "leading politicians, historians, writers and other thinkers" (*New York Times* report of the Athens symposium), but to entertain 12-year-old English children in 1938. World thinkers might therefore find it heavy-going.

But there was also a secular saint present in Athens, Sean MacBride, the United Nations High Commissioner for Namibia (South-West Africa) and holder of both the Nobel and Lenin Peace Prizes. Did he perhaps raise the debate to a different level?

Well, in a way he did just that. "The Capitalist system is Terrorism", declared this senior international civil servant, "and the people are forced to take up arms and revolt against the System." Here is high theory indeed. The people are entitled to take up arms, no less, and presumably, if the whole thing is not to degenerate into a futile gesture, to kill other people merely because someone in that society happens to be drawing quarterly dividends from General Motors. Alas, Mr MacBride failed to conduct his theoretical analysis to its logical conclusion. For, although not all capitalist countries are democratic, all democratic countries appear to be capitalist. Capitalism would therefore seem to be a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for democracy. If capitalism is also in essence terrorist, then we arrive on Mr MacBride's reasoning at the conclusion that *democracy is terrorism*. Such an apparently startling notion might not, however, be altogether unwelcome to Mr MacBride who, prior to becoming Ireland's Foreign Minister in 1948 and subsequently a saint of the International Left, was Chief of Staff in the Irish Republican Army in the 1930s when—as now—it was fighting against the elected democratic Government there.

In such a career it must have occasionally have been necessary to repeat to oneself:

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air

Might that not also have made an apposite motto for the symposium as a whole?

NOTHING I HAVE quoted struck me as outlandish or untypical—unless it was the occasional orthodox defence of democracy from, for instance, Mario Soares. Athens conformed

Linguists Admit On-going Defeat Situation

New York

A SOCIETY of college professors, linguists and others who decided last year that the best way to clean up American-English would be to publish annually a list of a dozen words to be banished from the language, appeared yesterday to be ready to concede defeat.

Irregardless of their desire to make a really unique effort at providing a viable alternative to, you know, the current ambience of learning resource centres, Americans for the most part are still opting for the junk words. The bottom line, in other words, remained unchanged.

From "irregardless" to "bottom line", most of the words and phrases in that paragraph are taken from the first "Linguistic Hit List" produced by the "Unicorn Hunters", a 10-year-old society of men and women who cherish language. The "dozen worst words" which clutter everyday speech and writing in America were culled from nominations submitted by the society's 2,000 members.

BY DRAWING UP *annual lists of "over-used, misused or pompous" words, the society hoped to do for language what the FBI's "10 Most Wanted Criminals" list has done for law enforcement.*

But Mr W. T. Rabe, who teaches at a State college in Michigan and is the secretary of Unicorn Hunters, admitted yesterday that Americans are not speaking, or writing, much better than before.

The Unicorn Hunters are especially troubled by the phrase "you know." Many Americans, particularly young people, are unable to complete a single sentence without using it. The society appointed a commission to find a solution, but its final report used the phrase 68 times—although it is on the banned list.

ONE DRAWBACK *to the society's efforts is that concerned citizens have to write for the list of banned words and phrases.*

"Anybody who wants the list has to send me an envelope on which he or she has written his or her address and to which he or she has affixed a stamp", said Mr Rabe. "We banned 'self-addressed' some time ago because that implies that the envelope wrote an address on itself."

Of American speech in general, Mr Rabe commented: "I have noted no significant improvement since 1939. I find that some students are even misspelling their own names. Perhaps we're going back to the Elizabethan period, when spelling didn't make any difference."

Ian Ball
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH

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broadly to the type of a thousand such international jamborees—Western democrats fawning on Third World dictators and applauding arguments that struck at the roots of their own societies.

Nor is casuistry of the kind already examined any longer reserved for international symposiums. It is a growing part of Western political conversation. Even while I was in the midst of writing this, I heard the brilliantined Dr David Owen, the British Foreign Secretary, telling the House of Commons that the Marxist guerrillas of the Patriotic Front were justified in their terrorist campaign against Rhodesia because they were fighting for Majority Rule. Asked to apply the same standard to dictatorial African régimes, some of which are materially supporting this campaign, he appealed to MPs not to disparage Commonwealth partners which had "differing interpretations of the way to reach democracy." What is the significance of the spread of this dishonest logic-bending?

Dr Conor Cruise O'Brien goes some way towards explaining it in the *New York Review of Books*. Writing about South Africa and Rhodesia, he argues that "the appeal to democratic values, officially dominant in the Western white nations, serves to delegitimise white rule in Africa." And against South Africa and Rhodesia democracy can be invoked as an ideological weapon very easily. All that is required in practice is to parrot the slogan "Majority Rule."

BUT THE Afro-Asian *bloc* has ambitions that extend beyond Southern Africa. It clearly hopes to manipulate the "Western white nations" into making a series of political and economic concessions on a world scale. These include the "New International Economic Order" and the proposal for a New International Information Order, i.e. an international news agency owned and operated by Third World governments. In such enterprises the Third World has a remarkable advantage. In Dr O'Brien's words: "The Africans can make use of the United Nations . . . a theatre whose conventions and traditions are exceedingly well-suited to the drama of (Western) guilt." If anything Dr O'Brien understates his case because the United Nations today is only one stage in the general theatrical forum for Afro-Asian accusation and Western self-flagellation. To it we must now add the various UN agencies—UNESCO, the ILO, UNCTAD, etc., in which the global psychodrama has gradually occupied stage-centre, driving the original charitable or specialist functions into the wings.

There is, however, a snag. The slogan "Majority Rule", so effective against South Africa, is for the moment powerless against the West. To quote Dr O'Brien for the last time, we can distinguish between ourselves and white Africa by arguing that "we accept majority rule and they do not." Indeed the reason that democratic values can be exploited to such effect against Southern Africa is because they still possess a life of their own in Western countries. Quite apolitical people in Britain, for instance, were roused to a rare indignation by the discovery that in the late 1960s "One Man, One Vote" was not fully realised in Northern Ireland. (This infraction—local government elections were conducted on the basis of a rate-payer franchise—has since been remedied.) As a result the idea of democracy is an unreliable ally in ideological struggles. If it can be summoned into action against South Africa and white-minority rule, so it can also defect to the pro-Western side of an argument and testify against, say, a leftist Panamanian dictator.

SUPPOSE, HOWEVER, that the meaning of democracy could be altered in such a way that it was no longer a fitting description of Western societies—indeed, was largely at variance with them. Its continued prestige might then make it an invaluable ideological weapon of the Third World, as useful against Canada as against South Africa. Such a startling transformation requires two stages. First, conventional Western multi-party democracy must itself be discredited as a sham, a façade, bereft of all "true", "real", or "complete" democratic values and in reality manipulated by a corrupt and/or tyrannical Establishment. Hence Signor Libertini's ingenious formulation of "Complete Democracy" which, if taken seriously, would condemn as fraudulent every single democratic state in the modern world.

And, secondly, once democracy has been emptied of its sole known concrete meaning, it can then be conveniently reinterpreted to suit the interests, tastes and practices of the majority of UN member-states. An anti-capitalist or socialist slant to the definition would seem to be called for. Nor would much ingenuity be required to demonstrate with mirrors that the democratic idea is necessarily bound up with the Majority of People, thus with the Masses, thus with the Poorest, thus with Socialism, thus with World-wide Redistribution of Wealth, etc., etc. Communists pioneered this very argument in the 1940s with the slogan "Communism is economic democracy." Within a short time, democracy might become just another vague Left notion—like "Equality" or "Social Justice"—which could be manipulated to shame the West into making the political and economic concessions now demanded with only moderate success. Socialist dictatorships like Tanzania might simultaneously claim "true democratic" status and stigmatise any relatively prosperous Western country, from Sweden to West Germany, which resisted its demands, as inherently, or spiritually, or globally undemocratic. Was not something very like this transformation being attempted by most contributors at the Athens symposium?

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THERE IS NO mystery why Third World dictators should encourage such re-interpretations. It is in their interest to do so. But why do Western statesmen like Dr Owen cooperate so readily in this poisoned casuistry? Eugène Ionesco, the playwright, complained recently in ENCOUNTER: "I have occasionally attended international meetings called by UNESCO and the International Theatre Institute, only to be grieved and downcast by the demonstrations of Western cowardice. . . ." And there is the notorious case of Daniel Moynihan, disavowed by his own Government behind the scenes and openly criticised by other Western Governments when, as Ambassador to the United Nations, he called a tyranny . . . a tyranny.

One reason for this nervous cooperation is the character of the audience for foreign-policy discussions in Western nations. It is drawn disproportionately from intellectuals—all relations of Koestler's celebrated "Call Girls"—with a persistently soft spot for the ideological Left. In their minds, indeed, democracy and socialism have already coalesced—even though they cannot be found together anywhere else on earth. They find it difficult to admit, therefore, that a government which confiscates the fortunes of the rich (for the purposes of this argument, the rich can be taken to include anyone whose fortune has actually been confiscated) or seizes the subsidiaries of American multi-national corporations can really be very objectionable. Should such a government be shown up indisputably as a tyranny none the less, they are easily drawn into making excuses for it. Perhaps our definition of democracy is unreasonably formal? Or maybe the conditions of underdeveloped countries justify a few brief departures from the form of democracy in order to realise its essence? Could it even be that Dr Nyerere has invented a new and superior form of democracy?

THOSE WHO actually *make* policy are rarely under such delusions. But they are easily led astray by that cheap *Realpolitik* which is the defeatism of intelligent people. It never seems worthwhile to them to contest what they dismiss as purely theoretical arguments on which no substantial interest immediately depends.

In their view Ambassador (now Senator) Moynihan's criticism of some Third World governments' record on human rights achieved nothing, secured no improvement, merely irritated the governments concerned and made them less amenable to United States interests. Similarly, only one European representative opposed the UNCTAD statement that Third World poverty was the result of colonial exploitation—a Czech diplomat who excused Communist states from this charge. No doubt Western diplomats concluded that merely rhetorical concessions would do no real harm.

This attitude stems from a profound misunderstanding about the nature of ideological politics. All future discussions about substantial issues inevitably take as their starting-point that rhetorical concession inimical to Western interests. To embody the concession in a substantial proposal (like a "common fund for commodity stabilisation") would therefore damage Western interests; not to move beyond rhetoric at all would expose the West to the accusation of hypocrisy. And this debate, in which the West is impaled on a Morton's Fork dilemma, is also conducted *within* Western countries where ideas of justice, restitution for past wrongs, and fulfilling promises and commitments actually influence political arguments and decisions. Indeed, in the long run, the most powerful forces swaying international politics are *moral ideas*. Everything, including money, hops to their tune eventually.

SO, IF THE WEST were to surrender the moral and ideological prestige of democracy to the rulers of the Third World simply by failing to fight a semantic battle, it would place itself at a marked disadvantage in all the subsequent disputes on matters of substance. The argument would then run: if you *really* believe in democracy, then you must submit to world-wide redistributive taxation, accept a reduction in Western living standards to achieve greater equality between rich and poor nations, surrender an increasing amount of national sovereignty and political power to international organisations in which the Third World has a majority. . . .

Does all this sound perhaps a little far-fetched? Shortly before he was shot by the firing squad, the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico said to his Hungarian cook: "You thought that it would never come to this. You see now that you were wrong. . . ."

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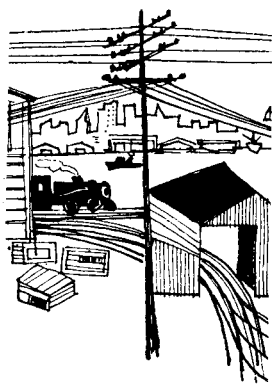
AUTHORS & CRITICS

Bombs & Illusions in World War II

Lord Zuckerman Replies



DOCTOR CHARLES KINDLEBERGER'S unswerving faith in the views on bombing policy which he entertained in 1944 speaks well of his "partisanship" — his word—to past belief, but sadly finds little, if any, justification in history. I should be grateful if you would allow me to correct him on the following matters.

1. Contrary to what he writes, but as noted in my book, the plan to destroy the railway network of North-West Europe, with which my name is associated, at no time differentiated between tactical and strategic targets. In place of a pre-existing "tactical" plan to cut railway lines and destroy bridges just before D-Day, what was proposed was that the railway network of North-West France, the Low Countries, and Germany should first be crippled by attacks on its most important nodal points. I quote here from the version of what, for convenience, I shall call the AEAF/SHAEF "strategic" plan that was considered at a meeting of the British and American Air Chiefs on 15 February 1944.

> "The result of successful attacks should be virtually the devastation of the larger servicing and traffic centres in North-West Europe. The free functioning of these centres is an essential condition for the necessary flow of rail traffic. Elimination of a number of adjacent railway centres would paralyse the movement in the whole region they serve. . . . In any event, the effect will be such that the subsequent movement by rail of major reserves into France should almost be impossible. This effect may be achieved even before the full plan is completed. . . . The supply difficulties which the enemy's military machine will experience are merely an indication of the even more severe difficulties to which the German civilian supply system will be subjected as a result of attacks on German rail targets. The more servicing repair centres are destroyed in Germany, the more difficult will it become for the enemy to maintain his home front. Even now, before attacks have begun, the enemy is operating his railways under a considerable strain. . . . The sooner Western Germany is attacked, the sooner will difficulties of movement impose a considerable strain on such industry as remains to the enemy in the Rhineland. The proposed attacks on German rail centres may, in fact, contribute at least as much to the sterilisation of this area so far as its influence on the enemy's war potential is concerned, as attacks on the war industries they serve. The further, therefore, the attack on railway communications or railway centres is pushed Eastwards into Germany, the greater will be the effect on Germany's war production."

In addition to attacks on railway centres, this plan called for the destruction of specific bridges, both affecting the assault area and beyond, it being understood that for reasons of security these particular operations could not be launched till nearer the time of the invasion. Contrary to Dr Kindleberger's statement, at no time did I say that railway bridges could not be destroyed by bombs. Unlike him, I had had the opportunity of seeing that they could be. What the plan said was that attacks on bridges of the kind that heavy bombers were then able to undertake were a pretty expensive proposition. Only a direct hit counted on a bridge, whereas any bomb on a railway centre caused damage.

HOW *effective is a bomb? and how intelligent is the strategy which determines how it is used in war (or, for that matter, how it is deployed for "deterrent" purposes in peace)? Since 1945 a debate has raged among veterans of the horrific and presumably successful World War II bombing raids; and it nowadays includes experts on "détente", "limited nuclear warfare", "tactical missiles", "search and destroy" commanders, "limited disarmament" advocates, et al.*

In the November ENCOUNTER PROFESSOR CHARLES KINDLEBERGER *ventured to raise some American doubts about the British viewpoint as presented by Solly Zuckerman in his recent book "From Apes to Warlords" (Hamish Hamilton, 1978). As is the practice of this "Authors & Critics" department in* ENCOUNTER, *we offer* LORD ZUCKERMAN *the usual "right to reply."*

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All these concepts were spelt out in the first draft of the plan which I had prepared for an Allied Air Forces Bombing Committee set up in the Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) H.Q. This body began work on 10 January 1944, not, as Dr Kindleberger seems to imply (p. 40, col. 1), when I returned to England from North Africa at some vague date in early 1944.

2. In its comments on the AEAF/SHAEF plan, the Enemy Objectives Unit (EOU), of which Dr Kindleberger was a member and about which he writes, declared that what was proposed was useless from a tactical point of view while, from the strategic point of view, they had "adequately analysed" rail transportation "as a strategic target system", and that it had "usually received low ratings on the grounds that damage to rail transport can under most circumstances be absorbed in the general economic system without producing effects on the fighting capabilities of the enemy. In our view [the EOU paper went on to say] the system of rail transport is one of the relatively strong links in the German war machine." At a meeting convened on 25 March by Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff, this view was echoed by the Director of Bombing Operations of the Air Ministry in the following terms:

> "Attacks on railway centres in the Reich will represent effort dissipated in some measure against one (in view of its fragmentation and dispersal) of the most invulnerable targets of the German economic system. The fact that the railway system is *the one common denominator of the whole enemy war effort* [words used by Air Chief Marshall Sir Arthur Tedder] is a clear indication of its unsuitability as a vital target system in strategic attack."

3. Dr Kindleberger now says that what he calls "the economists' position in many respects was developed by military figures", amongst whom he mentions Air Commodore Sydney Bufton (then the Director of Bombing Operations at the British Air Ministry) and Colonel Hughes of the United States Strategic Air Forces. What he does not say is that the detailed operational arguments of RAF Bomber Command, put forward against the AEAF/SHAEF plan with Bufton's support, had been quickly shown to be wrong by what subsequently happened. This was clearly stated in a document prepared by the British Air Ministry not more than three weeks after a bridgehead had been secured in Normandy, which, however, was circulated to only a very few people—but not to AEAF—under a cover-note signed by Bufton. It is reproduced in full as Appendix 4 of my book. It should be noted that neither Bufton nor Hughes had any authority—any more than had the Enemy Objectives Unit—to put forward plans which were as much the concern of the Army as of the Air Forces. Nor, for that matter, were any of them members of the planning teams for the invasion.

4. Dr Kindleberger writes that early in 1944 ("perhaps January") Colonel Hughes none the less approached the Unit to ask for its views about the employment of the US Strategic Air Forces in support of the invasion. The plan which the Unit suggested, and which Dr Kindleberger tells us conformed with what Colonel Hughes had in mind, was to destroy railway and road bridges "in a circle around the Normandy lodgment area." This plan was clearly a variant of the one that had first been suggested by a Joint Planning Staff, comprising representatives of the Air Forces and Armies, which had been submitted to the High Command of AEAF and SHAEF by the beginning of January 1944. It was this plan that had been judged inadequate by the AEAF Bombing Committee, on which Colonel Hughes at first represented the US Strategic Air Forces. This matter is fully discussed in my book.

5. Dr Kindleberger's recollection of the meeting on 25 February 1944 is equally at fault—as he admits it might be. The account that I gave of this meeting is based not only on memory, but also on the minutes of the meeting. I do not remember making the observation attributed to me by Dr Kindleberger, nor is there any record of it in the verbatim minutes which run to 43 pages and which are now available in the Public Record Office.

6. I am afraid that Dr Kindleberger's memory is also "altogether faulty"—as he cheerily admits it might be—about the attacks on bridges. He writes that "the heavy bombers participated fully in the attacks." This they did not do. As is noted in the official American and other histories, the attacks were carried out predominantly by fighter and medium bombers.[1] In fact, early in May 1944, General Spaatz (the Commanding General of the US Army Air Forces) had specifically vetoed the use of heavy bombers in attacks on bridges.[2]

7. He is equally wrong about the reason why attacks on bridges were not started until shortly before D-Day. The delay was necessary—as I have already said—for reasons of security—not because I (S.Z.) "thought that it was impossible to destroy bridges." Even the Joint Planning Staff plan of December 1943 was not so misguided as to propose an early start to the attacks on bridges. As Craven & Cate state in the official American history:

> "In order to achieve maximum surprise against

[1] W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate, *The Army Air Forces in World War II* (1951, University of Chicago Press), Vol. 3, pp. 158–159.

[2] Notes of meeting held in the Air C-in-C's Office, H.Q., AEAF, 6 May 1944, to discuss bombing targets (TLM/MS.136/15, 11 May 1944).

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the Seine bridges, it was decided that the air forces should withhold their attacks there until shortly before the invasion."

WHAT Kindleberger writes about a bombing attack against a Seine bridge at Vernon which was "directed" by General Frederic Smith on 6 May (the date was 7 May) "in violation of his orders" is also, I fear, totally fanciful. The first point to make is that it is not clear whose orders Dr Kindleberger has in mind. They could not have been those of General Smith, since the General was Chief of Operations in AEAF and gave orders in the name of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, his Commander-in-Chief. Second, no new directive based on the EOU plan was issued after the Vernon bridge was destroyed—certainly not by the AEAF Command. But third, and more important, it was not "one of the ironies of history"—Kindleberger's words—that the bridge which "really did not go anywhere" was chosen as a target. It was precisely *because* it did not go anywhere and because its destruction would not therefore give the Germans a hint about the area of our projected invasion, that it was chosen. The decision to authorise experimental attacks on bridges was taken at the meeting held on 6th May, presided over by Leigh-Mallory, the Commander-in-Chief of AEAF.

I was certainly not "unaware of the Loire aspects" of the pre-invasion programme, as Dr Kindleberger puts it, but again, these aspects were not as he implies. As Craven & Cate state:

> "But in the period prior to D-Day . . . in order to disguise Allied intentions . . . *the bridges over the Loire were not touched* [my italics]". (p.210)

8. It certainly would have been "incredible"—again Dr Kindleberger's word—if I had said anywhere that the destruction of road and rail bridges would not have impeded the movement of German forces. If I took the trouble to point out that the Germans retreated in fairly good order from Normandy without any air support and in spite of the overwhelming air superiority of the Allies, it was to make the point that the destruction of the Seine bridges did not constitute an insurmountable obstacle to well-led and disciplined troops even after a major defeat. It is perhaps worth noting that in the Italian campaign the German forces, again with virtually no air support, held out south of the River Po for some nine months, in spite of the destruction of all the fixed bridges on which it might have been supposed they would have had to depend for the movement of supplies and reinforcements.

9. On the major issue, Dr Kindleberger is on his own if he believes that the strategic offensive against the communications network of North-West Europe was anything but highly effective. If he wishes to disregard the documentary evidence I used in writing my book, he can refer—since he admits that he has not yet done so—to official American and British histories. G. A. Harrison, for example, writes that "By D-Day . . . the transportation system was on the point of total collapse",[3] and L. F. Ellis[4] quotes from two contemporary

People's Pop

Moscow

RED ARMY colonels, Heroes of the Soviet Union and Moscow bureaucrats jostled in a giant queue this week for a chance to see a Western pop group. Strictly rationed tickets were sold for ten concerts by Boney M, one of the West's best-known rock bands.

Word of the group's impending arrival spread rapidly through Moscow early this month, despite their official billing on posters as simply "a vocal instrumental ensemble from the countries of the Caribbean Sea."

By the end of the week tickets were changing hands for up to the equivalent of £100 and police had cordoned off the booking offices at the Rossiy Concert Hall, a couple of hundred yards from the Kremlin.

A packed house of 3,000 gave an enthusiastic reception to the first Boney M Show, although the group decided to leave out one of their biggest hits—"Rasputin . . . Russia's Greatest Love Machine."

"I really miss not being able to sing 'Rasputin'," Jamaican-born Marcia Barrett said afterwards. "But we were told not to sing that. We were also told not to be too sexy."

The staid official Moscow newspapers even joined in Boney M fever with interviews and photographs, concentrating on the group's poor origins and their work as a "collective."

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

[3] G. A. Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack* (1951, Washington US Govt. Printing Office), p.224.

[4] L. F. Ellis, *Victory in the West* (1962, HMSO, London), Vol. 1, p.111

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German documents (1944) passages which include sentences such as: ". . . large-scale strategic movement of German troops by rail is practically impossible" and ". . . the Reichsbahn authorities are seriously considering whether it is not useless to attempt further repair work."

FINALLY, may I point out that the plan to attack the German synthetic oil refineries was put forward not when Dr Kindleberger suggests it was—that is to say, before the dispute about the AEAF/SHAEF communications plan erupted (a dispute that had little to do with the merits of the case)—but as a counter-proposal to the plan to attack the communications network and as a means of assuring the strategic independence of the Air Forces. That was the main issue underlying the opposition of those he served to the air plans for the invasion of Europe.

I fear that what Dr Kindleberger has written has only served to reinforce my view that there is a wide difference between recommendations on military planning made *a priori* by economists, and those that are based on evidence derived from previous experience. Economic wisdom unassociated with direct knowledge of military affairs is hardly a useful guide to air strategy. It did not prove to be that in the Second World War nor, twenty years later, did it do so in the policies that underlay the vastly destructive but militarily ineffective bombing of Viet Nam.

I AM SORRY that so distinguished a scholar in his own field as is Dr Kindleberger neither found it necessary to consult contemporary records nor to read my book carefully before submitting his piece to ENCOUNTER. And I offer him my retrospective apologies, for what he took to be arrogance in the period when we first met, at the same time as I remind him that it no doubt came as a surprise to me that the empirical evidence on which I based my recommendations was set aside by theoreticians who had not even read it.

A Rejoinder

By C. P. Kindleberger

LORD ZUCKERMAN'S REPLY to my Comment on the passages in his autobiography dealing with bombing support for the cross-Channel 1944 invasion tends to confuse rather than clarify the issue, which was whether or not he, and the superiors whom he advised, opposed the bombing of bridges in France as support for the invasion until the surprising destruction of the Vernon bridge by eight fighter-bombers a month before D-Day.

It would unduly extend the discussion if I were to go through Zuckerman's broadside point by point; but perhaps I may be permitted to make four remarks:

(1) It makes no sense to an economist to say that bridges were "expensive" and that bombing railroad yards "does damage" (point 1), without some more precise comparison of costs and benefits, including especially that bridges take three weeks to repair for through-traffic, and railway yards at most four hours.

(2) I find incomprehensible the suggestion in points 1 and 2 that there is no difference between tactical and strategic attacks on railways. The 100 plus-or-minus attacks on the Hamm marshalling yard in the Ruhr had no tactical value in assuring the lodgement of the Allied forces in France on D-Day (nor much strategic value either). The attacks on the bridges of the Seine and Loire, which pushed back the railheads at which reinforcements of the German army defending the beaches would unload, had no strategic value in weakening the German economy.

(3) Am I to understand from point 7 that Zuckerman now claims that his side recommended the bombing of bridges which led to the attack on Vernon? This is difficult to square with my memory of the period, or with the autobiography. And why so, if they were expensive, and presumably had limited effect (point 8)?

(4) Delay to achieve surprise mentioned in point 7 applies, of course, to systematic attack on Loire bridges. It was irrelevant to the Seine, since the Germans were virtually certain that we were going to land on one side or the other. But this is not the reason for the long delay. It was that on 6 May 1944 the official policy of the Allied forces was opposed to attacks on bridges, and recommended only those on marshalling yards.

Lord Zuckerman's vehemence in defending an old position and conceding nothing seems to this observer to lack the scientific detachment one would expect from a man of his attainments and position.

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LETTERS

Bettelheim & "Holocaust"

BRUNO BETTELHEIM'S thoughtful examination of the contemporary relevance of the Holocaust (in ENCOUNTER, December) manifests a mainstream modern attitude which is, though understandable, excessive and deleterious in its consequences. I am referring to the tendency amongst writers and thinkers, whose life's preoccupation has been the attempt to comprehend the Holocaust, to frequently speak of its historical uniqueness and to regard the suggestion that contemporary events are comparable to the Holocaust as in some sense a profanation of the memory of Hitler's victims.

In his article, Dr Bettelheim maintains that the Holocaust should be regarded as unique (at least in this century), and Elie Wiesel, who is quoted, complains of the demystifying and popularising of the Holocaust which robs its victims of their uniqueness. Both writers deny that such modern abominations as the slums of Harlem, My Lai, and the war in Viet Nam can be compared to the Warsaw Ghetto, Auschwitz, or the Holocaust itself. They are correct in pointing out the implausibility of those comparisons; and there is unquestionably a great deal of contemporary misuse and misapplication of such terms as "Nazi-like slaughter", or "Goebbels-like lie." Nevertheless, these legitimate points go little way toward establishing that the Holocaust can and should be regarded as an incomparable historical event.

THE REAL CONTEMPORARY parallels with the Holocaust are the barbarities of 1979: the concentration camps of Chile, the recent genocide in Cambodia, the "medical experiments" of the Soviet Union, and the widespread use of torture in Latin American, African, and Asian nations. The world's reception of the refugees departing South-east Asia can be compared to the world's reception of the Jews fleeing Europe prior to the Second World War.

These events may differ in magnitude from the Holocaust, and most of them include only some of its specific horrors. But they all embody its essential relevant characteristic: a premeditated attempt to exterminate a certain type of person, whether racially, politically, or religiously victimised. The Holocaust may be incommensurate, but it is not incomparable. Had the Holocaust victimised a smaller number of people, or had it manifested itself in a less diverse array of horrors, I should not think it would be regarded as any less heinous. And really, such a Holocaust, writ smaller, exists in many places today.

To say that the Holocaust is similar to modern atrocities in a *relevant* way is not to deny that there are important *conceptual* differences. Some of these differences include the qualitative horror of sheer numbers; the complete silence of the world in the face of the Holocaust; and the fact that the Jews are a people in an historical sense, whereas those who hold unpopular political views are not. But these conceptual differences in no way affect the relevant similarities. Contemporary atrocities are made no less evil or profound in their ultimate human consequences because of these conceptual differences.

THE EFFECT OF the mainstream current approach to the Holocaust, which dwells on these conceptual differences and regards the Holocaust as incomparable, is one of great irony. Dr Bettelheim laments the undeniable fact that, while the West had ample evidence of Nazi atrocities in the years leading up to World War II, no aid was offered to the Jews of Europe. Yet the prevalent unwillingness to see contemporary events in the same light has, as its direct result, inaction (on the part of Jews no less than others!) in the face of clear evidence of atrocities around the globe. That solemn pledge, "Never Again!", used by Dr Bettelheim, is still earnestly sounded at testimonials and memorials to the Holocaust, and written in essays and poems about the Holocaust, just as if it had not, as yet, happened again. I am reminded of E. M. Forster's maxim "Only connect . . ." which is a plea to intelligent people to see the patterns and similarities in events, despite the pain involved in doing so.

To be fair to Dr Bettelheim, he does suggest in his article that the lesson of the Holocaust is that we must determine to support victims of current atrocities and fight againt the tyranny which causes them. But this prescription just does not bite if we also see these atrocities as less significant than the Holocaust. Only if current horrors are seen in the same light will the sense of guilt and shame we feel towards the Holocaust cause us to act. And it is undeniable to say that we have not acted toward today's atrocities the way Dr Bettelheim rightly suggests we should have reacted to the Holocaust. Our response today is not significantly more deep-felt, widespread, or effective than it was in the 1930s. We have not learned from history, and it is repeating itself.

OF COURSE, IT IS ALSO true today (much more so than in the '30s) that the cure for atrocities can be worse than the disease; for example, Senator George McGovern's advocacy of active American intervention to halt the recent genocide in Cambodia.

But surely, in general, we have a long way to go before we reach that desperate point where the only workable cure is worse than the disease. As Dr Bettelheim states, Western protest was enough to stop Hitler's murder of mental invalids, and it might have been enough to save the Jews. The main point, however, is that we will never develop a proper cure until we stop misdiagnosing the disease, and begin to correctly diagnose it as the same disease as the Holocaust.

ANDREW STARK

London

Barzini, Urban & Italians

I YIELD TO NO ONE in my admiration for Luigi Barzini's wisdom, wit, and political courage—but he is poorly served by his memory (ENCOUNTER, February). In my conversation with Rosario Romeo, I summarised Barzini's characterisation of the Italian *modus operandi* in these words:

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"I am strongly, and perhaps wrongly, under Luigi Barzini's influence in thinking that the basic good nature and opportunism of the Italians would somehow take the heat out of, or at any rate corrupt, the extremism of any Italian political party.... If my Barzinian image of the Italian character is correct, even a vote much larger than 51% in favour of, say, the Communist Party would not result in a 100% Communist rule, because the Italians would always know how to play and outplay the system both inside and outside the Party. One may call this Italian wisdom, sophistication, cynicism, corruption, opportunism, what you will, but it is clear to me that even a 100% vote for this or that extremist party would be nibbled away at the edges, watered down, reduced to ridicule or manoeuvred into a cul-de-sac. It was so under Fascism and I feel confident it would be so under Communism." (*The Washington Quarterly*, January 1978, *Eurocommunism*, 1978; extracts printed in *The New York Times* and *International Herald Tribune*)

Luigi Barzini now says that these words misrepresent his views. So they may, but not the views he expressed to me in 1976. Two years before my talk with Professor Romeo, Barzini authorised for broadcasting and publication the following record of our conversation:

BARZINI: ... the [Italian] Communist Party, with its lack of emphasis on the freedom of the individual, does not provoke the same abhorrence and rejection as it does in some other countries. "Why", the Italian will say to himself, "we have always had oppressors and tyrants, and we have always managed to beat them at their game by making friends in the right places, weaving connections and intrigues to outwit them." The Italian will accept the tyrant and will put a good face on unjust laws, but secretly he will set about to make a mockery of the law and put down the tyrant. That is what has happened throughout the centuries, and that is how Fascism was paralysed....

The individual can always find his way through the maze by having friends in the right places and giving free play to the Italian's native bag of tricks.... The Italians will know how to outwit the Party, disobey tyrants, frustrate their plans, and disorganise their lives. This happened under Fascism, and it has always been the way in Italy. (*Survey*, Spring 1976; *Eurocommunism*, 1978)

If my, in any case tentative, representation of Luigi Barzini's words can be faulted, it is on the question of "good nature"—whether corruption, opportunism, venality and the like can be listed under the rubric of "good nature." My contention is that in one important sense perhaps they can.

Under a tyrannical régime, whether of the Left or Right, corruptibility and opportunism are great humanisers—indeed they are often the only humanisers. Where the Law itself is mired in illegality, an unenthusiastic prison guard or opportunistic Party official can mitigate hardships and save lives—as Luigi Barzini and I both know from our personal experiences of Fascism, Nazism, and Communism. It is the *upright* fanatics we have reason to fear. Happily for us all, Italy seldom produces too many of that breed. Long may this weakness of the Italian character survive!

GEORGE URBAN

Hove, Sussex

Colin Welch's "Crosland"

An Alternative View—By DOUGLAS EDEN

THERE IS a certain strange and uncharacteristic aridity about Colin Welch's "reconsideration" of Anthony Crosland (ENCOUNTER, January). I suspect it may, in large part, arise from the natural inhibition of a decent man criticising the ideas of a deeply respected figure who has recently passed on and whose memory will command widespread affection for some time to come.

Mr Welch wonders whether he overstates his case against Crosland's revisionism. Perhaps what it comes down to is that Mr Welch's distaste for any public economic sector at all leads him to accuse Crosland of offering "not so much *alternative* ends to those of the extreme Left as an alternative route to the *same* ends."

Only a free-market purist can maintain this view, and could by the same token be accused of providing an alternative route to supranational plutocracy or oligarchy. All of which gets us nowhere, hence the barrenness of the argument. Crosland may have been an optimist, but he was no purist or utopian. However, Anthony Crosland did perhaps—as Colin Welch says in the title to his piece—take too much for granted.

He said in Costa Rica in 1975,

"A mixed economy is essential to social democracy. For while a substantial public sector is clearly needed to give us the necessary control over the economy, complete state collectivism is without question incompatible with liberty *and* democracy.... Underlying all our beliefs is a profound concern for liberty, democracy and the rule of law."

If Crosland could be accused of an oversight in espousing the Mixed Economy, it is that he never said what degree of imbalance in favour of the State sector would endanger the health or survival of the Free-Market sector. What he probably took for granted was continuing economic growth and stability which would ensure the private sector and provide an increasing surplus to sustain a more egalitarian distribution of cash and improve public services.

He did not reckon on the feather-bedding policies in industry and public service and the inflationary pressures encouraged by Governments bidding for votes; trades unions bidding for membership and power; and managers and civil servants bidding for peace, short-term

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productivity, personal empires and Government support. He did not bargain for the decline in national morale consequent on the political failures so brilliantly catalogued by Ronald Butt in the March ENCOUNTER.

He underestimated the extent to which all this and trade-union power would discourage savings and investment—and, hence, the economic growth on which his entire theoretical structure was based. (*The Future of Socialism* contains a chapter on investment, savings and inflation: "Considerations of stability, as well as of growth, direct attention to the central role of savings, and to the responsibility of the Government for securing a volume of savings sufficiently steady to avoid inflationary crises, and sufficiently high to sustain the desired long-run rate of capital creation. . . ." p. 299.)

He could not foresee that prosperity would reduce the moderate active working-class mass membership of the Labour Party and subject the machine to easy and rapid takeover by extremists and fellow-travelling opportunists, thus destabilising the political balance. Nor did he envisage the domination and politicisation of the big unions by the conspiratorial hard Left.

WHO COULD HAVE predicted the extent of inflation launched by the Heath–Barber régime and its rapid escalation to crisis level by the rise in oil prices and industrial unrest?

With economic growth stymied, the state sector continued to mushroom. If public expenditure's share of the national cake increased by 17% under the 1964–70 Wilson Government, it increased by 25% under Heath. In the 15 years since 1964, it has rocketed from 41% of GNP to nearly 70%.

Of course, the balance of the Mixed Economy is not only defined by the ratio of public to private expenditure. Perhaps more significant as an indicator is the proportion of the population directly dependent on each sector for the major portion of its income. Rough reckoning indicates that of those in direct receipt of income in 1975—the employed, the retired, the unemployed, students, others who rely on Government benefits—approximately 50% received all or a crucial portion of that income from the state, its corporations or agencies. This percentage does not include people employed in the private sector by grace of Government employment subsidies or by firms which derive most of their income from Government grants or contracts. If dependants are included, *probably more than half the entire population is dependent on state expenditure.*

The majority of our people thus have a vested interest, however short-sighted and desperate, in the continuing and expanding patronage of the State. Given our democracy and the quality of political leadership, the trend may seem inexorable.

THERE IS OBVIOUSLY a dilemma here for Social Democrats who want to retain a Mixed Economy. The question of where the balance should be struck between private and state sectors has gone begging ever more stridently but vainly in this decade.

By now, the economic balance is so weighted toward the state sector that it is a moot point to say the question is one of retaining a mixed economy. It is perhaps more appropriate to ask if we wish to *restore* the Mixed Economy.

This is a question Anthony Crosland in effect declined to consider. I remember him saying in 1971 that he could make no further additions or revisions to *The Future of Socialism* and *The Conservative Enemy*: there would be no more original works. At a fringe meeting at that year's Labour Party conference, he repeated this and said it was now for others, for a younger generation, to develop new ideas from the Social Democratic tradition. His eye scanned the room and fell on my colleague, Stephen Haseler, who had just published his first thoughts on populist social democracy in his Fabian pamphlet, "Social Democracy: Beyond Revisionism."

Around that time, Crosland wrote an article of a populist nature for *The Observer*, in which he touched on the sensitive immigration question and expressed sympathy and understanding for the working-class Englishman's anxiety at the transformation of his neighbourhood. There was some reaction. Crosland did not venture into this territory again. But he fought against the élitist protectionist "nil growth" fashion of the late '60s and early '70s, criticised Galbraith and Mishan and reasserted the need for growth to extend more freedom and consumer pleasures to his working-class constituents. He attacked the public ownership proposals in Labour's 1973 programme.

Thereafter, as Daniel Bell indicated in his *Memoir* of Crosland [ENCOUNTER, August 1977], he seems to have adopted Max Weber's "ethic of responsibility" as a guiding principle. By 1976, he was leading the opposition in Cabinet to any downward adjustment in public expenditure by which some rectification of the burgeoning state sector's share of consumption might have been made.

The most generous interpretation that can be placed on this is to assume Crosland believed growth could soon be restored, and the balance in the economy redressed, by increasing activity in the Private sector without releasing resources allocated to the State sector; that any significant reduction in public spending might set a process in train which would leave the State sector debilitated and the economic mix biased against its future growth once private industry recovered.

Social Democrats such as Harold Lever still seem to take this view. While always reaffirming their belief in the Mixed Economy and a healthy Private sector, they have thus avoided recognising the increasing imbalance. As the assault on the Mixed Economy becomes more vicious, they still avert their eyes, refuse to believe it and hang on—or they fly away to Brussels, or retire from public life.

IF SOCIAL DEMOCRATS STILL WANT a Mixed Economy, they must find the political courage to redress the present imbalance. They must be willing to support a rolling-back of the State sector and a concomitant reduction in taxation. Of course this means a willingness to take on the Left in the Labour Party; but there is no other way. Those who are convinced of the essential connection between a balanced Mixed Economy and liberty, democracy and the rule of law—as Anthony Crosland was—must finally face up to the consequences of their timidity and act. Otherwise they will merit Colin Welch's stricture, but instead of following "an alternative route to the same ends" as the extreme Left, they will soon find

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themselves pressed into supporting the Left's own "alternative strategy" for the sake of personal political survival. They will have entered into a state of intellectual and political bankruptcy which no "ethic of responsibility" can justify.

DOUGLAS EDEN

London

Doom from Sinai

MUCH AS I agree with Professor Sinai's article [ENCOUNTER, April] on the state of our civilisation, does it not, in its naked objectivity, become part of the social sickness it seeks to expose?

Contrast this with the work of the old religious prophets of doom and we see the essential difference. They were at least concerned with the individual's salvation; and I would suggest that it could still be the aim today to keep ourselves mentally and morally integrated, even if we must remain only tiny islands in the midst of a troubled sea.

R. J. WILSON

Harrow
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Grass & Irony

THE MOST ASTUTE traveller may see only one-dimensional ironies. Günter Grass ("Fleeing Towards the Future", ENCOUNTER, March) instances the detention of the Kenyan writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o to reinforce his assertion that "abuse of power" by "the ruling cliques in Nairobi" (represented as a typical Third World government) is "indistinguishable" from that in South Africa, Czechoslovakia, Chile and Soviet Russia. Ngugi is meant to represent those "people who see, dream up, demand, or just describe . . . 'other realities' outside or alongside the prescribed reality."

I wonder if Ngugi is more to Mr Grass than one who fits neatly into his pattern of ideas. Does he know that Ngugi is a self-proclaimed Marxist—not, therefore, one who demands an alternative *creative* "reality"? Further, a piquant irony, does he know that in a prefatory note to his *Petals of Blood* (1977) Ngugi acknowledges gratefully that while completing it he enjoyed the use of a house in Yalta belonging to that famous defender of literary integrity, the Soviet Writers' Union? No Russian novel comparable to *Petals of Blood* would have received that Union's sanction. Further, two months before Mr Grass's article appeared Ngugi had been released by the new Kenyan President, in an amnesty to mark Kenya's Independence Day (reported in AI's Bulletin for January). We shall hear no such news from Soviet Russia; rather we read, in your issue containing Grass's article, of the Zinoviev case. This comparison does not make the Kenyan government ideal; but it is, I hope Mr Grass will feel, another "drop in the ocean" at least.

Ngugi's offence may, perhaps, have had some connection with his attachment to that ideology so friendly to "independence", Marxism. So far as I know, Meja Mwangi, a fellow Kenyan novelist who does "just describe" the unpleasant "reality" (in *Kill Me Quick, Going Down River Road*) in humane and non-ideological terms, has escaped similar treatment; in fact, the first of these novels, which give an unvarnished picture of low life and corruption in Nairobi, won the Kenyatta Prize.

MICHAEL THORPE

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A Last Word on the Webbs

I AM IMPRESSED by Dame Margaret Cole's tenacity [ENCOUNTER, Letters, March]. But I hope that a printer's error—which incorrectly identifies my most recent response to her disagreements with my article [ENCOUNTER, March 1978] on "The Webbs as Pilgrims" as occurring in "September 1981"—is not a harbinger of exchanges yet to come. For it is assuredly Dame Margaret, and not I, who "wants to go on arguing about the Webbs." (I notice that, reviewing the Webb letters lately in *Books and Bookmen*, she could not resist the temptation to take a pot-shot at a certain "American professor [who] has written a long and rather silly article about them in the magazine ENCOUNTER.")

What more is there to say? On the one hand she appears, if unwittingly, to agree with many points of my argument. She says (and I quote from her letter) that "of course the Webbs are élitists", that "their influence was less than it might have been", that "their judgment of leading Americans was as faulty as was theirs of English politicians", that Sidney Webb was a failure as a Labour Cabinet Minister.

On the other hand, she insists (and I quote again) that "I did not say—or even imply—that the Webbs were racialist in today's sense of the word." Readers may decide for themselves, by referring to these passages of Dame Margaret's earlier letter of July 1978. "As to Asia", she then observed, "Beatrice herself wrote that she disliked the Chinese too much to provide a really impartial statement about them", and later: ". . . I well remember listening to a dispute between Beatrice and Bertrand Russell in which Russell accused her of turning down the Chinese completely because they *smelt*" (Dame Margaret's italics).

What Dame Margaret says about the Boer War suggests it is she who needs to study her texts more closely. It is, to put it mildly, a pretty loose reading of the record to make Beatrice Webb out as a kind of unsung champion of native rights. The passage to which Dame Margaret refers ("as long ago as the Boer War Beatrice noted in her *Diary*" etc.) does not, in fact, occur in the diary at all. Dame Margaret's reference is rather to an explanatory heading, which prefaces a section of diary selections for the period of the Boer War published posthumously in *Our Partnership*, which was not written by Beatrice until at least the early 1930s.

"Looking back on the long and bitter controversy", Beatrice reflected with the benefit of hindsight, "I am struck with an extraordinary omission, which seems to have passed unnoticed at the time"—unnoticed by herself as well as others. At the time of the Boer invasion of Cape Colony in October 1899, both Beatrice and Sidney, as is well known, supported the British cause as the lesser of available evils. There was no question of any concern for native rights. Their interest extended only to trying to avoid a split in the Fabian Society, and to trying

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to find the right horse to back in the domestic political scene (a task at which it may fairly be said they were typically maladroit). Thinking the war inevitable, Beatrice pointed (in a letter to Mary Playne) to "Gladstone's christianity and Rhodes' blackguardism", and to "allowing the Boers to arm so thoroughly", as possible causes—nothing about native rights here—adding, with a series of early British defeats in mind (and perhaps revealingly), that the British had been "altogether outclassed by the shrewd bigotry of 17th century Puritanism. . . ."

DAME MARGARET'S LETTER ends on a heartening note. I regard the admission, in her last sentence, that the Webbs did eventually embark on a "pilgrimage" as a major breakthrough. With perseverance, might she be eventually persuaded to accept that that was the point of departure of my article? The prospect is appealing. But at the rate of progress made to date in these exchanges (which, it being customary in these matters for authors to have the last word, I think should now end), it would by then in all probability indeed be "September 1981."

GEORGE FEAVER

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Ronald Butt's Analyses

MR RONALD BUTT'S explanation of Britain's present malaise in the latter part of his article (ENCOUNTER, March) has affinities with observations put forward in the last few pages of my "New Inflation" (ENCOUNTER, May 1974). In addition to his examples of unpopular legislation, in particular the decision to transform Britain within a few years to a multi-racial society, I mentioned the changeover to decimalisation-metrication (which, we were assured, would make us all more efficient) and our entry into the EEC (which was also to make our economy more competitive and efficient). True, some time after we had officially become a part of the EEC, a referendum was held. But with pro-Market majorities in both parties, the British people were misled by the spate of propaganda, much of it masquerading as information.

Turning to Mr Butt's final paragraph, the re-shaping of our society according to the model favoured by the "enlightened" cabal cannot be regarded simply as a consequence of the apathy of the electorate, since it is also a cause of it. So long as the two major parties continue to ignore popular sentiment, and to impose their enlightened measure of reform on their prejudiced and backward-looking countrymen, the electorate has little choice and, therefore, little interest in the outcome of elections.

Apparently this is not the sort of political apathy that is favoured by W. H. Morris Jones (cited by Ronald Butt): it is hardly the "effective counter-force to the fanatics" who endanger liberal democracy. On the contrary, this political apathy (resulting from a sense of continued frustration) is that which leaves increasing power in the hands of those fanatic reformers who know with certainty the direction society must take.

E. J. MISHAN

City University
London

Objectivity

I READ Sidney Hook's piece "David Caute's Fable of 'Fear and Terror'" with great interest [ENCOUNTER, January]. After an open paragraph of vehement attack on "unscrupulous attorneys", "dishonest journalists", and "political demagogues", one would expect a scholarly analysis, free from error or distortion. Unfortunately this is not the case.

For example:

(*1*) "The incontrovertible point here is not that Communist party membership or leadership is or should be a criminal offence—so far as I know only Walter Lippman favoured outlawing the Communist party—but that membership in the Communist party as it was organised . . . ." Is it possible that Hook does not know of the involvement of Hubert Humphrey (who he lumps with Lippman earlier) with a bill, in the Congress, to effectively outlaw that party?

(*2*) Towards the end, he states "In France and Italy to this day any attempt to break up the Communist underground organisations, which function like a state within a state . . . would result in crippling strikes. . . ." These are not the words of an objective scholar.

DONALD W. KAHN

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University of Minnesota
Minneapolis

No Less

I AM HAPPY to inform Stanislaw Lem [ENCOUNTER, April] that, thanks to me, Mme Marriot's *Rien du tout, ou la conséquence* attains the absolute "*pureté du non-être*": no plot, no characters, no scenery, no *ambiance*, no narrator, and no reader.

LUIS MEANA

Vienna
Austria

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New York City

ROAD TO HELL: *The book business is not what it used to be.*

Shedding their old-boy, old-shoe manners, publishers are now marketing even their most serious writers like soap. Ballantine's paperback of Mary Gordon's sensitive, highly acclaimed first novel, "Final Payments", is being promoted in a 30-second television spot that looks like an ad for "True Romances." Bantam Books last year commissioned six different portraits of the hawk-faced Jerzy Kosinski to grace each cover of his collected works. Avon's television spot for Graham Greene's subtle espionage novel "The Human Factor" tells us: "Some men betray their country for money. And some for power. In Graham Greene's 'The Human Factor', one man does it for love."

"Sure it's circusy to hype books this way, like you were selling toothpaste", says Jane Heller, director of publicity for Dell. "But if it gets people to read, what the hell?"

NEWSWEEK

New York City

LABEL: Common-law husbands aren't recognised here—Immigration files that arrangement under "moral turpitude." Just how to describe out-of-wedlock partnerships puzzles headline writers, but the good, grey "New York Times" is flying a possible label: "Male Comrade."

DAILY MAIL

Washington, D.C.

HOT NEWS: *There have long been newsletters for doctors, lawyers, engineers, interior decorators, bricklayers and joggers. Now there's one for pornographers.*

"I've been into sex for a while", said Dennis Sobin, publisher of TAB (The Adult Business) Report. "Right now, I'm getting more fun than money, but I believe the money will come in." He said that he was trying to get part of the nation's multibillion dollar pornography business and that he had no competition in his field. "This newsletter will give businessmen some advice to let them know what their competitors are doing. It will let them know what's new in the business."

"Adult business" operations face different problems from other enterprises, Mr. Sobin said. "The newsletter fills a dire need on the part of adult-industry businessmen who are being hounded by cops, sheriffs, politicians, tax collectors and religious zealots. They don't know how to react to fight back. Now they can exchange experiences, learn about their rights and become better managers."

Among the features of the newsletter are: (1) An editorial critical of the authorities for paying "grossly exaggerated and misdirected" attention to child pornography. (2) A collection of "news" items from around the country, including a "legal briefs" column. (3) An advertisement for postcards from Denmark and T-shirts designed for X-rated stores. (The shirts read, "Purveyors of Fine Smut since . . ." with blanks for the store's name and date.)

Does Mr. Sobin have any moral qualms about his endeavour?

"If I'm helping people in their business, especially small businessmen, which most of these are, I feel I'm doing a moral good."

NEW YORK TIMES

Los Angeles

MASS INTIMACY: The L.A. premiere of "Hair" was as big a smash as the one in New York. This marvellous movie has to go through the roof. Of course, half the seats were roped off for 400 of Producer Michael Butler's most intimate friends.

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

London

APOLOGIA: *To his "astonishment" a letter written by Tom Stoppard, the playwright, to George Moore's widow in 1972 is to be auctioned by Sotheby's.*

The 2-page missive, which is expected to fetch between £100–£150, contains a humble apology to the great Oxford philosopher's wife for having scribed his name for the central character in "Jumpers."

"I beg your forgiveness for this trespass [writes Stoppard], but I wonder whether it was clear that my own George makes a great fuss that he was not the original George Moore—a fact that he finds painful.

"The play is very self-aware about the coincidences of names and continually distances my hero from his famous namesake. There is no chance of anyone in the audience assuming that the real Dorothy Moore cavorts around in the outrageous manner of Diana Rigg."

Stoppard wrote the letter in response to a "mild" protest on Mrs Moore's behalf after the premiere.

EVENING STANDARD

London

WORLD'S A STAGE: The National Theatre, now seeking a once-and for-all settlement to its run of unofficial disputes by stage staff, will put on its first show for ten days tonight.

Six disputes since the National moved into its South Bank home have run up a bill of £140,000 in lost box office takings.

While the 27 stagehands continue their unofficial strike the National will give a performance of the John Galsworthy play "Strife."

"Strife", the Galsworthy play, is based on an industrial dispute in the tin-mining industry.

Galsworthy's dusted-down lines suddenly smacked of contemporary relevance. "What's the union's game?" inquired one board member. "No surrender . . . no compromise", said the boss figure.

EVENING STANDARD/DAILY MAIL

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AUTHORS

Michael Thompson has a doctorate in Social Anthropology and has lectured in art and urban sociology. He held a post-doctoral fellowship at M.I.T., and has been visiting fellow at the International Institute for Environment and Society in Berlin. He has in addition been a regular soldier, a builder, and a mountain climber (on the 1970 Annapurna and 1975 Everest expeditions, among others). He recently carried out fieldwork in Nepal and is currently dividing his time between writing a book (*High Risk*) about Sherpa and Western involvement in Himalayan mountaineering, and working with Aaron Wildavsky at the Institute for Policy and Management Research in New York.

Kenneth Minogue is Reader in Political Science at the London School of Economics, and author of *Nationalism* (1976) and *The Concept of a University* (Weidenfeld, 1972). His articles in ENCOUNTER include critiques of J. K. Galbraith (December 1977), Carlos Castaneda (August 1976), Dr. Spock (July 1975) and Erich Fromm (July 1974).

Sebastian Haffner's study, *The Meaning of Hitler*, will be published by Weidenfeld in June.

Andrew Waterman's book of poems, *From the Other Country*, was published in 1977 by Carcanet Press.

Joachim Neander is a special correspondent for *Die Welt* (Hamburg).

Richard Pipes is Professor of History at Harvard University and was Director of its Russian Research Center. Among his books are *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (rev. ed. Harvard University Press, 1965), *Russia under the Old Régime* (Weidenfeld, 1974) and *Soviet Strategy in Europe* (Macdonald, 1976). His article on Solzhenitsyn will appear in *Solzhenitsyn at Harvard*, edited by Ronald Berman, which the Ethics and Public Policy Center of Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., will publish later this year.

D. J. Enright is a poet, literary critic, and novelist, and has held various Chairs of English Literature abroad. He was from 1970–72 co-editor of ENCOUNTER, and is now a director of Chatto & Windus, who published his most recent volume of poems, *Paradise Illustrated*, in 1978.

Fritz Stern has been Professor of History at Columbia University since 1967, and is currently Elie Halévy Professor at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris. His works include *Varieties of History* (1956, n.e. Macmillan, 1970), and *The Failure of Illiberalism: Essays on the Political Culture of Modern Germany* (Allen & Unwin, 1972). His article is based on a broadcast in the BBC Third Programme.

John Naughton is a Lecturer in Systems at the Open University.

Alan Brownjohn's latest volume of poems, *A Song of Good Life*, was published by Secker & Warburg in 1975.

Michael Hulse won First Prize in the Poetry Society's 1978 competition for unpublished poems, for which the judges were Fleur Adcock, Gavin Ewart and Ted Hughes. He teaches in Germany.

John O'Sullivan is Parliamentary Sketch writer and leader writer for the *Daily Telegraph* in London, and also writes for *Commentary*, *The Spectator*, and *Hibernia*. He was formerly London correspondent for Radio Telefis Eireann, and editor of the *Swinton Journal*. He is a professional non-participant in such international conferences, as he describes in his long-distance critique. . . .

Lord Zuckerman held various scientific advisory posts to RAF Combined Operations from 1939–46, and has since been a chief scientific adviser to the British Government. He has had a distinguished career in anatomy and zoology (he is Professor Emeritus of the Universities of Birmingham and of East Anglia), and is a Trustee of the British Museum (Natural History). Among his books are *Scientists and War* (1966), *The Image of Technology* (1968), and *Beyond the Ivory Tower* (1970).

Charles P. Kindleberger is Professor of Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He served in the Office of Strategic Services in Washington D.C. from 1942–44, and as Intelligence Officer to the 12th Army Group from 1944–45.

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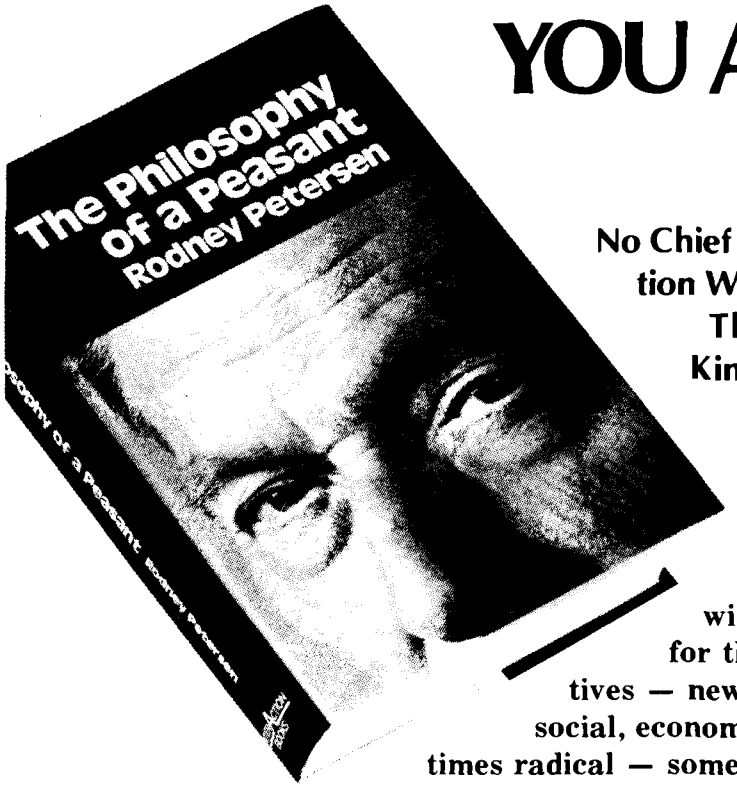

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